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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATION No. 261

WASHINGTON, D. C.

ISSUED DECEMBER 1936

A GRAPHIC SUMMARY OF FARM TENURE

(BASED LARGELY ON THE CENSUS
OF 1930 AND 1935)

By

H. A. TURNER

Assistant Agricultural Economist
Bureau of Agricultural Economics



This publication is one of a projected series of 10 publications, as follows:

A Graphic Summary of Physical Features and Land Utilization.	O. E. Baker
A Graphic Summary of Farm Tenure-----	H. A. Turner
A Graphic Summary of Farm Taxation-----	Donald Jackson
A Graphic Summary of the Value of Farm Property--	B. R. Stauber
A Graphic Summary of Farm Machinery, Facilities, and Expenditures-----	O. E. Baker
A Graphic Summary of Farm Labor and Population.	J. C. Folsom and O. E. Baker
A Graphic Summary of the Number, Size, and Type of Farms, and Value of Products-----	O. E. Baker
A Graphic Summary of Farm Crops--	O. E. Baker and A. B. Genung
A Graphic Summary of Farm Animals and Animal Products.	O. E. Baker
A Graphic Summary of Farm Mortgage Debt.	D. L. Wickens and N. J. Wall

This series, which has been prepared under the general direction of O. E. Baker, senior agricultural economist, will bring up to date the Graphic Summary of American Agriculture published in 1931 as Miscellaneous Publication 105. In the case of this Miscellaneous Publication No. 261 the author, H. A. Turner, had the assistance of the Division of Land Utilization, Land Use Planning Section, Resettlement Administration.

The Graphic Summary of American Agriculture first appears in the 1915 Yearbook of Agriculture (also issued as Yearbook Separate 681), and was largely based on the 1910 census. The second was contained in the 1921 Yearbook (also issued as Yearbook Separate 878), and was based largely on the 1920 census. The third was published as Miscellaneous Publication No. 105, in May 1931, and was based both on the 1925 Agricultural Census and the annual estimates of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. It was divided into 11 sections, but these sections were bound together and issued only as a single publication. It was more inclusive than previous issues, particularly of maps and graphs relating to the economic and social aspects of agriculture.

The publications in this series devote still more attention to economic and social conditions. They are based on both the 1930 and 1935 census reports, as well as the annual estimates of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. They deal not only with changes between 1930 and 1935 but also, though very briefly, with the changes during the decade of urban prosperity and agricultural depression that preceded the more general depression. Most of the distribution maps for crops and many of those for livestock present the 1929 census returns, because the drought of unprecedented severity and extent in 1934 would make such maps for 1934 misleading. Several increase and decrease maps, however, show the changes that occurred between 1929 and 1934, or 1930 and 1935.

The graphic presentation was largely designed and drafted under the direction of R. G. Hainsworth, in charge of the Graphic Section of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

Most of the clerical work was done under the supervision of N. P. Bradshaw, who also prepared the indexes.

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INTRODUCTION

Farms of a size and type suitable for family operation with little hired labor are characteristic of the United States as a whole. Only the plantations of the South and a comparatively few farms elsewhere are too large for family operation. Owner-operated farms outnumber tenant farms and owner-operated farm acreage exceeds tenant-operated farm acreage. The general trend, however, has been toward tenancy, with a lessening ratio of equity in farm real estate held by the farm operator. In brief, farmers are gradually losing ownership of the land.

The proportion of farms operated by tenants has increased from 35 percent in 1900, 37 percent in 1910, and 38 percent in 1920 to 42 percent in 1930 and in 1935 (fig. 17). The percentage of farm land operated under lease has increased from 31 percent in 1900, 33 percent in 1910, and 37 percent in 1920 to 44 percent in 1930 and 45 percent in 1935 (fig. 6). The equities of the farm operators of the Nation constituted 54 percent of the value of all farm real estate in 1900, 50 percent in 1910, 46 percent in 1920, 42 percent in 1930, and have presumably decreased even further since 1930 (fig. 2—inset bar graph).

The proportion of farms operated by tenants who owned none of the land they farmed ranged in 1935 from 70 percent in Mississippi to 6 percent in Massachusetts. The proportion of farm land under lease to the operator in 1935 ranged from 62 percent in South Dakota to 8 percent in Maine and in Massachusetts. The equities of the farm operators in all farm real estate in 1930 ranged from an average of less than 30 percent in the three States, Illinois, Iowa, and South Dakota, to an average of over 70 percent in the three States of Maine, New Hampshire, and West Virginia, with a low of 28 percent in South Dakota and a high of 78 percent in Maine.

The rate of farm tenancy is influenced by a number of factors. Among these, crops grown, size, value, and type of farm, also color

or race and age of farmer, are considered in the maps and graphs that follow.

The highest rate of tenancy exists on cotton farms. In 1930, 73 percent of the cotton type of farms, as classified by the census, were tenant operated. Inasmuch as farms of the cotton type were over one-fourth (26 percent) of all farms in 1930, the high rate of tenancy on them not only affected the rate of tenancy in the South, where half the farms are cotton farms, but also that for the Nation as a whole. The rate of tenancy for farms other than those of the cotton type averaged only 32 percent for the entire Nation in 1930. In the South the rate of tenancy averaged 56 percent in 1930, but was only 38 percent for farms other than of the cotton type.

Cotton-type farms (in the census classification each tenant or cropper holding in a plantation is a farm) are mostly small and low in value. In 1930 they averaged 72 acres, from 38 acres of which crops were harvested in 1929. The average value of the land and buildings of these cotton farms was only \$2,960. Farms of other types, considered as a group, averaged \$9,256 in value in the United States as a whole; included 187 acres in total area; and had 64 acres in crops that were harvested. It is obvious that the high rate of tenancy on cotton farms comes not because the farms are of a size and value to make them more difficult to buy, compared with other farms, but because cotton farming must lend itself more readily to tenancy and because tenants on cotton farms are more commonly without much capital of their own.

In the South cotton-type farms are generally so numerous, so small, and so frequently tenant-operated, that there is a higher rate of tenancy on farms of under 50 acres in size (69 percent in 1930) than on farms of larger size. On farms of 50 to 174 acres the tenant rate was 43 percent and on farms of 175 acres and over only 34 percent. In the North and West, partly because cotton farms are insignificant in number, farms of the larger sizes and higher values have higher rates of tenancy generally than farms of small size and low value.

In the South the rate of tenancy remained almost unchanged on small farms between 1900 and 1930, but the number of these farms, already large in 1900, increased very significantly as a result of the expansion in cotton acreage, thereby materially affecting the rate of tenancy on all farms in the South and in the country as a whole.

Between 1930 and 1935 the rate of tenancy in the South decreased, owing largely to reduction in number of colored tenants and croppers. Some of these former tenants and croppers became wage hands and some migrated to the towns and cities.

The rate of tenancy among white farmers of the South (46 percent) in 1935 is much less than among colored farmers (77 percent). This arises in part from the fact that the colored farmers of the South are much more commonly engaged in cotton production. Among white farmers of the Nation, excluding the South, the rate of tenancy was 30 percent. The rate of tenancy among colored farmers of the South has increased only a little since 1900, when it was already 75 percent. But the rate among the white farmers of the South has increased considerably—from 36 percent in 1900 to 46 percent in 1935. The rate of tenancy among farmers elsewhere than

in the South changed less rapidly. It averaged 25 percent in 1900 and 30 percent in 1935.

Among colored tenant farmers of the South it is worth noting that 59 percent operated as croppers in 1935, that is, they depended on their landlords not only for land, but also for the work stock with which to farm that land, and generally even for food and feed while making the crop. The proportion of southern colored tenants who were croppers was only 47 percent in 1920, then increased to 54 percent in 1925, 56 percent in 1930, and 59 percent in 1935, as noted above. By contrast, only 29 percent of the white tenants of the South farmed as croppers in 1935, which is the same percentage as in 1925, and only a little higher than in 1920.

As might be expected, the percentage of tenancy among young farmers is much higher than among older farmers. But it is interesting that the number of young farmers has decreased and the number of middle-aged and old farmers has increased, that tenancy has increased among farmers of every age group, and that the increase was particularly rapid among farmers of the younger ages. Thus, of the number of farmers 25 to 35 years of age farming outside of the 16 Southern States there were approximately 652,000 in 1910, but only 449,000 in 1930, with a rate of tenancy among these farmers of 47 percent in 1910 and 59 percent in 1930.

The implications of farm tenancy are so many and so diverse in the different regions of the United States that they cannot be listed here, but it may be noted that tenancy affects such problems as those of balancing the production with the consumption of farm products, soil conservation, educational standards, migration from farms to cities and the ability of the migrants to find employment, and the accumulation or dissipation of rural wealth—in brief, most rural economic and social conditions and institutions. Moreover, the influence of tenancy is increasing rather than decreasing with the passage of time. There were only 180 counties in 1880 wherein as many as half the farms were tenant-operated, and practically all these were in the South; but in 1935 such counties totaled 890, and they effectively blanketed the Cotton Belt and much of the more fertile parts of the Corn Belt as well. The number of counties wherein half or more of the land in farms was under lease to the operator was 403 in 1910, 772 in 1925, 1,020 in 1930, and 1,107 in 1935.

Farm tenancy tends to increase with the commercialization of agriculture. Free land and democratic rural institutions have retarded the segregation of labor from capital in agriculture, as contrasted with industry; but the trend toward such segregation is clear. Increasing proportions of the farmers are becoming tenants in the regions where commercial agriculture is dominant, and increasing proportions of the tenants are becoming croppers or wage hands in the South. This trend is profoundly affecting both the present and future welfare of the rural people.

EQUITIES IN FARM REAL ESTATE, UNITED STATES, 1930

(INVESTMENTS OF FARM OPERATORS AND OF OTHER PEOPLE)

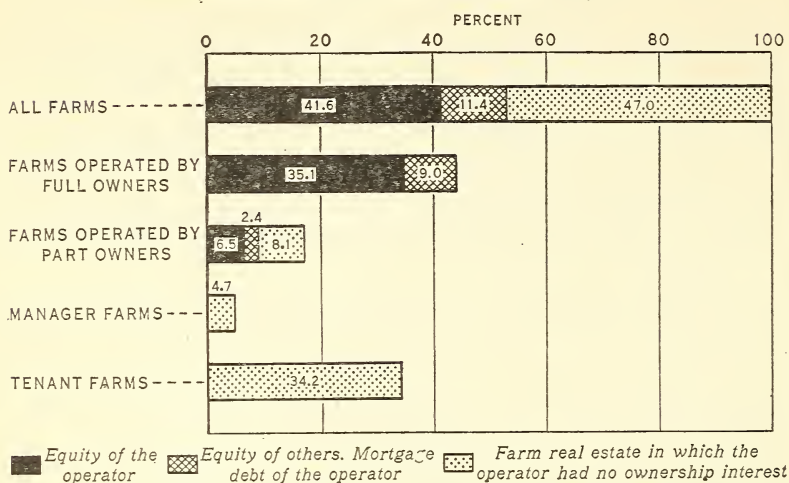


FIGURE 1.—The farms (land and buildings) in the continental United States operated by their owners were valued at \$25,364,000,000 in 1930. Against about 45 percent of these farms mortgages existed that approximated \$5,462,000,000, leaving an equity of \$19,902,000,000 as the value really belonging to the operators. This was 41.6 percent of the value of all farm real estate. Farm lands and buildings rented to tenants and croppers and under lease to part owners were valued at approximately \$20,278,000,000. Those manager operated were valued at \$2,238,000,000. Adding the value of rented and manager-operated farm real estate to the mortgage debt against farm properties owner operated, results in a total of \$27,978,000,000 as the investment of others than the immediate farm operator.

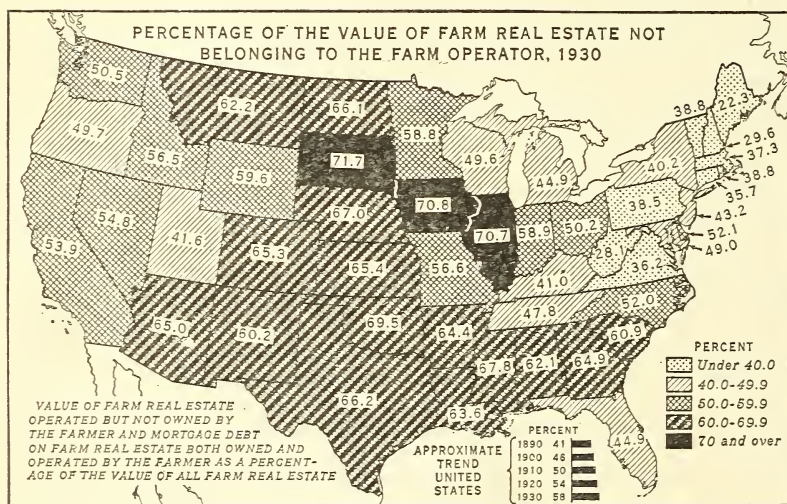


FIGURE 2.—Only in the States from Tennessee to Maine, and westward to Wisconsin, also in Florida, Utah, and Oregon, did the equity of farm operators in farm real estate exceed that of other persons in 1930. In Illinois, Iowa, and South Dakota the equity of farm operators was less than 30 percent of the total value of farm real estate. In 1880 the equity of farm operators constituted about 62 percent of the value of all farm real estate in the United States as a whole; in 1890 it was about 59 percent; in 1900 about 54 percent; in 1910 only 50 percent; in 1920, 46 percent; and in 1930 about 42 percent. An increasing proportion of farm operators have been sharing the income from the land with landlords or with mortgage holders.

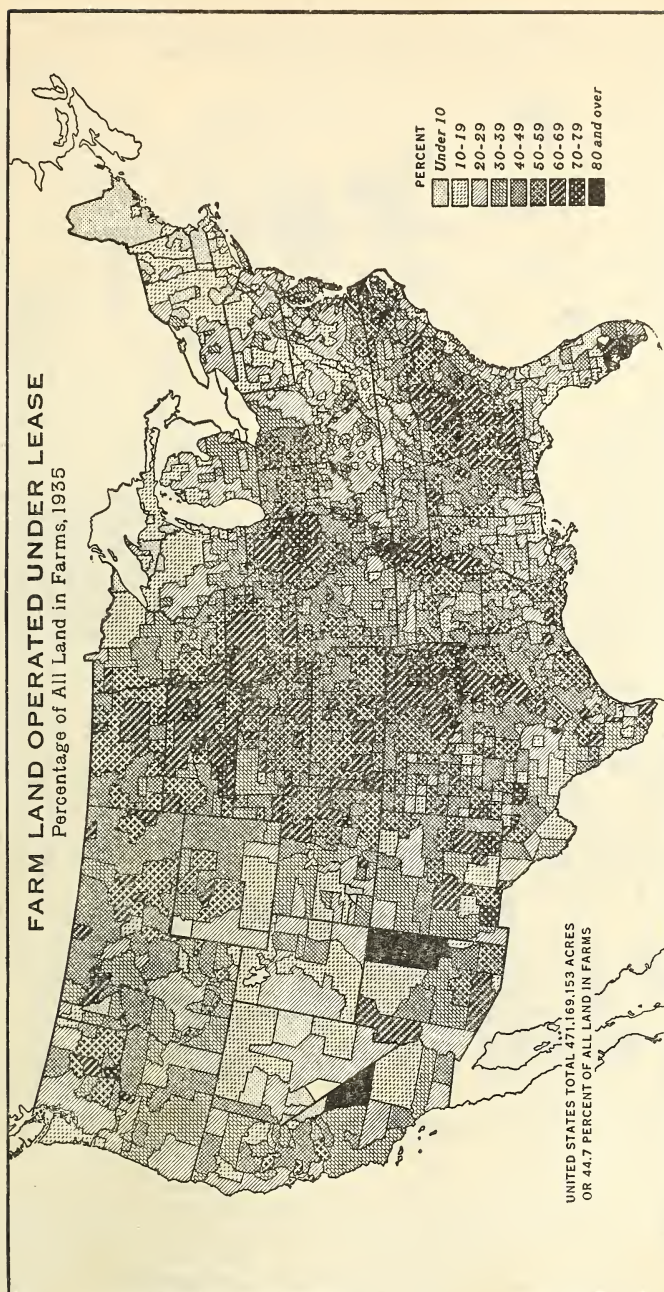


FIGURE 3.—The percentage of farm land under lease to tenants or part owners tends to be high where a high proportion of the land is in tilled crops and small grains, particularly if these are sold—note the cash corn portions of Corn Belt, the Wheat Belt (Great Plains) and the Cotton Belt. Moreover, in these and other regions the proportion of the land under lease tends to increase with the fertility of the soil. However, in parts of the West where land is largely grazed, high percentages of farm land may be under lease, mostly to part owners. The Appalachian, the Ozark, and the upper Lakes regions have small proportions of the land operated by tenants. Here the soil is inherently of lower fertility, much of the land is hilly, and dairying, livestock production, and general farming are characteristic.

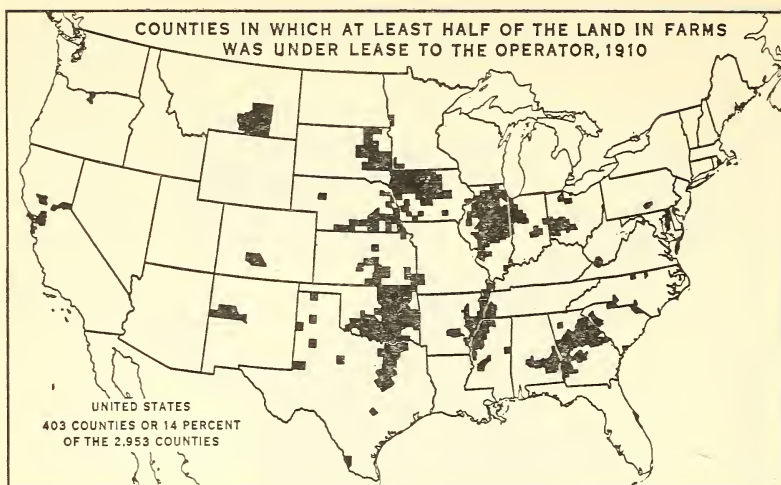


FIGURE 4.—Most of the counties in which as much as half of the land in farms was under lease to the operator in 1910 were in six quite distinct groups. Three of these groups were in the Corn Belt, two wholly and one largely in the Cotton Belt. The more western of these Cotton Belt groups was centered in Oklahoma, but extended into the Wheat Belt counties of Oklahoma and Kansas. There were in all 403 counties, 14 percent of all counties, in which half or more of the land in farms was under lease to the operator. Only a dozen of these were in the 11 Western States. The remainder was about equally divided between the South and the North, but with none located in New England, Michigan, Wisconsin, Kentucky, or Florida.

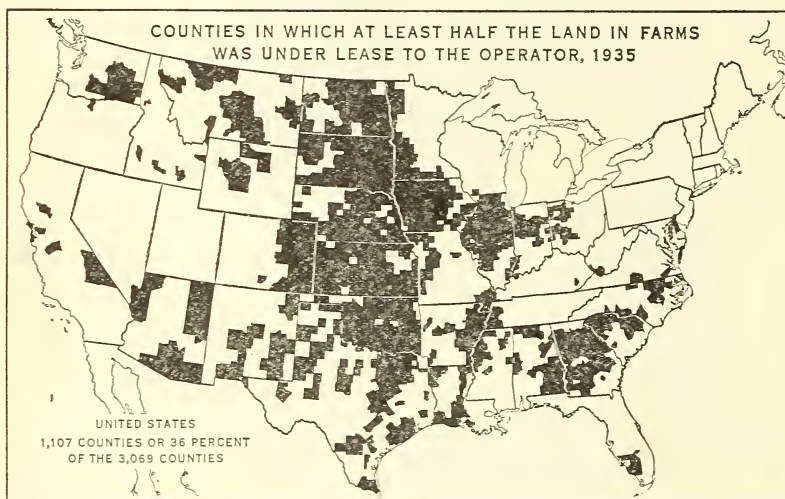


FIGURE 5.—The number of counties wherein so much as half of the land in farms was under lease to tenants or part owners increased from 403 in 1910 to 772 in 1925, to 1,020 in 1930, and to 1,107 in 1935. The increase was from 14 percent of all counties in 1910 to 36 percent in 1935. The two westernmost of the six rather distinct groups of such counties in 1910 coalesced by 1935 and expanded into one almost continuous band about 400 miles wide covering the Great Plains region and much territory along its eastern margin, all the way from Canada to Texas. Likewise the two eastern Corn Belt districts coalesced into a broad arm extending eastward from Iowa across the Corn Belt to central Ohio; while the two eastern Cotton Belt areas of 1910 expanded to include most of the Mississippi River bottom and cotton Piedmont counties respectively.

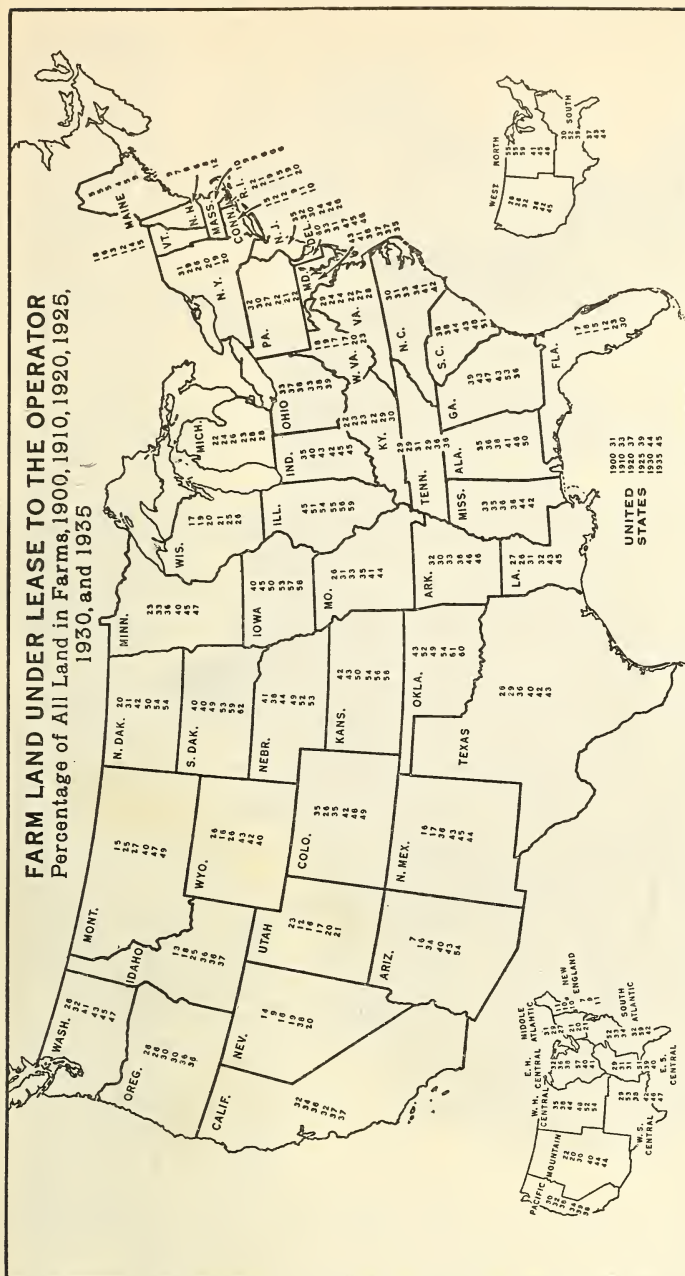


FIGURE 6.—In 1900 nearly one-third (31 percent) of the acreage in farms in the Nation was leased to tenants and part owners. Each succeeding census showed an increase, until by 1935 nearly half the land (45 percent) was under lease. The increase was especially rapid from 1925 to 1930. Geographically, the increase was greatest in the Prairie and Great Plains States, where the pioneer farmers have been passing away, while many of their children have gone to the cities to live. The highest percentages of farm land under lease are no longer in the South, but in South Dakota, with 62 percent; Oklahoma, 60 percent (after only 50 years since settlement); Illinois, 59 percent; and Iowa, 58 percent. The percentages declined in New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland to low points in 1930; also in New England and Virginia to a low point in 1925. But the 1935 census revealed an increase from the low points in nearly all these States.

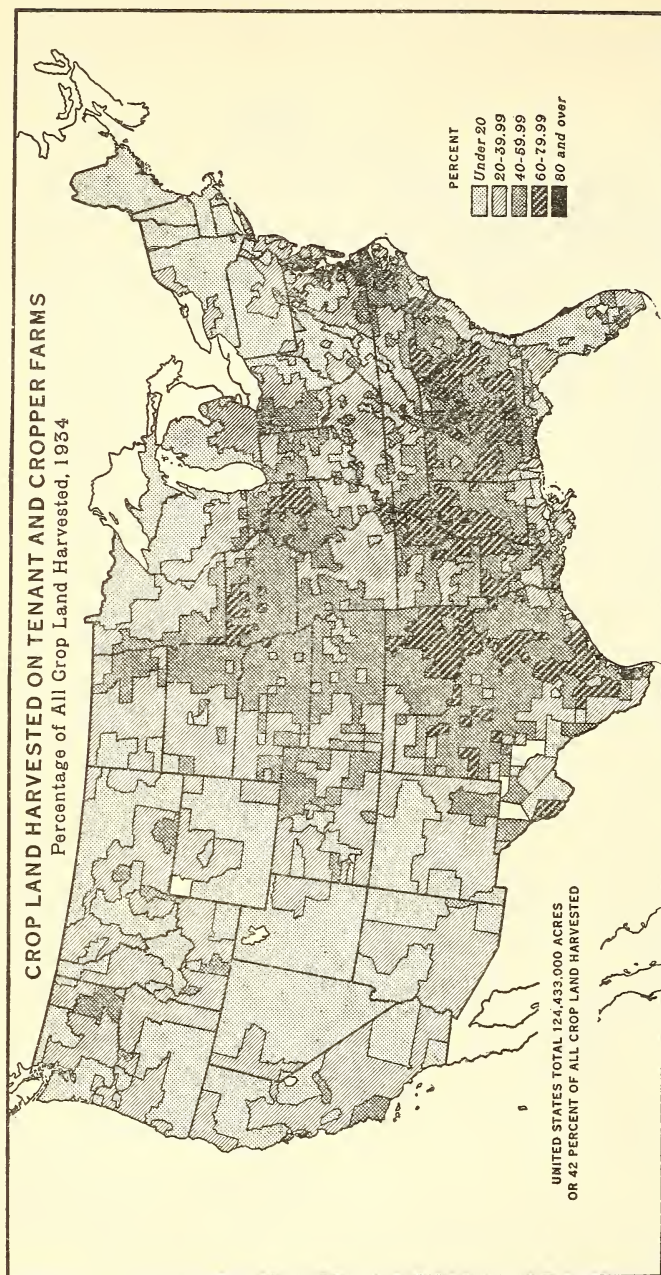


FIGURE 7.—Production of cotton, tobacco, and corn for sale apparently favors tenancy. In some counties of the Yazoo Delta, a region of rich soil, over 80 percent of the cropland (nearly all in cotton) was included in tenant and cropper holdings in 1934, and in most of the counties dominated by cotton, east of the Great Plains, the proportion exceeded 60 percent. On the other hand, in most of the Hay and Dairy Belt, and Dairy Belt of the North, and extending down the Appalachian Mountains to western North Carolina, also in many grazing counties of the far West, less than 20 percent of the cropland harvested was in farms operated by tenants. In the United States as a whole the same proportion of cropland as of farms was under lease to tenants who owned none of the land they farmed (42 percent). But in the Cotton Belt, tenant and cropper farms average a smaller crop acreage than owner-operated farms, and in the Corn and Wheat Belts a larger acreage.

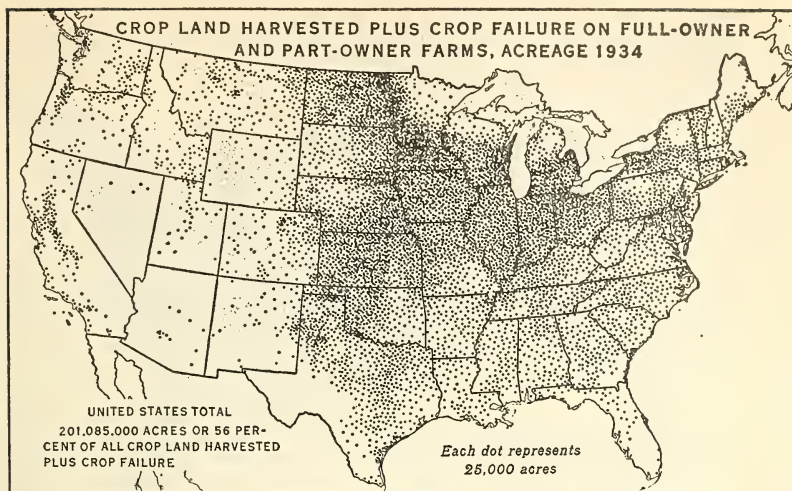


FIGURE 8.—The crop acreage in farms operated by owners, including part owners, is more uniformly distributed over the United States than that in farms operated by tenants and croppers. One reason is that in hilly sections and on poor soils, types of farming are followed—dairy, general, and self-sufficing, for example—which do not lend themselves readily to tenant operation. Another reason is that in better areas where most of the land can be put into crops, the grains or cotton tend to be grown extensively, and these crops lend themselves to types of farming adapted to tenancy. Note the larger crop acreage operated by owners north of the Potomac, Ohio, and Missouri Rivers.

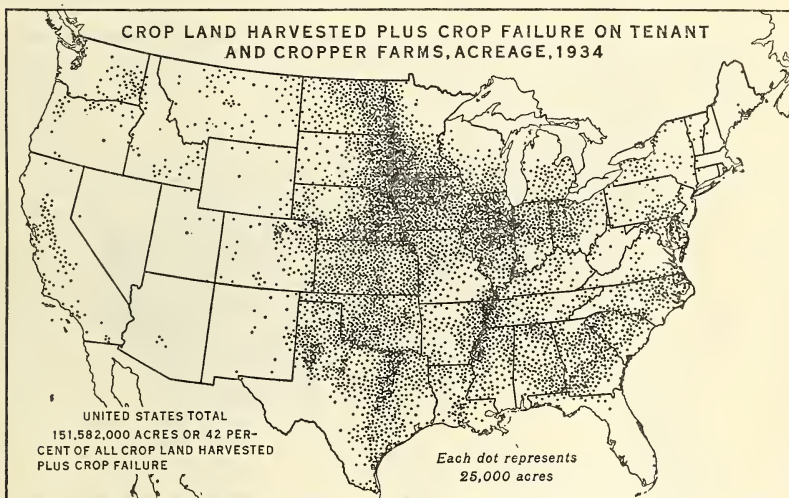


FIGURE 9.—The map indicates that cotton and wheat, cash crops, and corn where it is grown extensively and can be readily converted through hogs into cash, are adapted to tenancy; and that hay and pasture, which mean cattle, including dairying, and sheep, are not so well adapted to tenancy. Apparently fruit and vegetable production also are poorly adapted to tenancy. In brief, those enterprises which involve investment by the farm operator extending over many years, or long experience and a high degree of skill, are not well adapted to tenancy. It should be noted that the 1935 census did not obtain the rented crop acreage on part-owner farms, hence such acreage is not included in the map above.

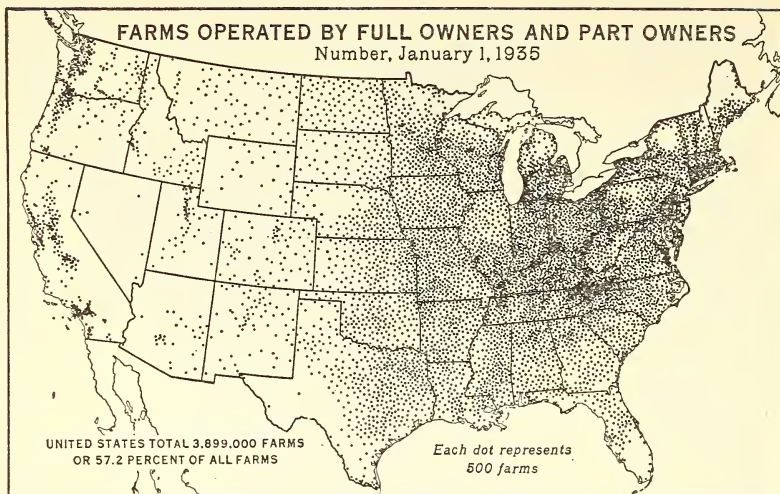


FIGURE 10.—With this map the discussion in the legends shifts from the acreage of land operated by tenants and owners to the number of farms. The number of farms in a given area operated by owners and part owners is influenced not only by percentage of farms so operated but also by size of farms and proportion of the land area in farms. In the dense spots of the Hay and Dairy Belt, the Ohio Valley, the southern Appalachians, and the Pacific Coast States, not only is much of the land in farms but also many of the farms are small and tenants are few. In the Yazoo Delta of western Mississippi, on the other hand there are few owners for although a high proportion of the land is in farms and these farms are of small average size, only about 1 farmer in 10 is an owner.

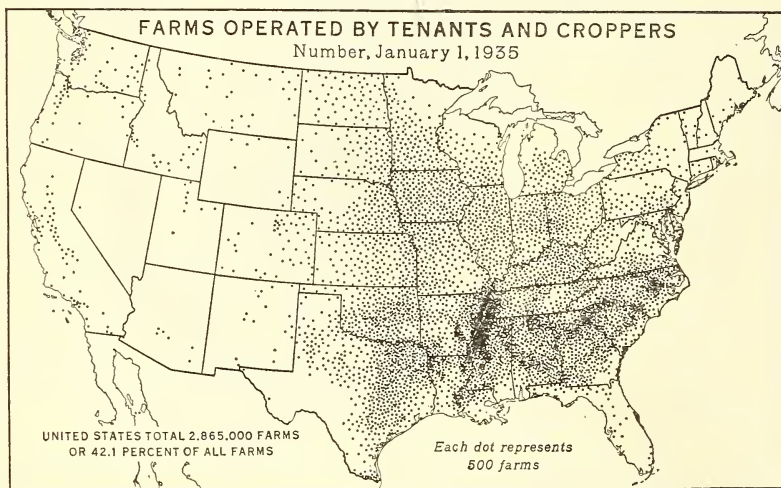


FIGURE 11.—The South contains less than one-third of the land area of the Nation, more than half the farms, and nearly two-thirds of the farm tenants and croppers. Cotton and tobacco, the one almost wholly and the other mostly grown in the South, are especially well suited to production by tenants. Moreover, nearly all the Negro farmers of the Nation, accustomed since slavery days to a condition of economic dependency, live in the South. The densest distribution of tenants in the South is in districts devoted mostly to cotton cultivation by Negro families. In the Yazoo Delta—practically solid black on the map—95 percent of the farm population is Negro in several counties. These tenants may have no higher standard of living than wage hands on the plantation, but they may have somewhat greater economic security.

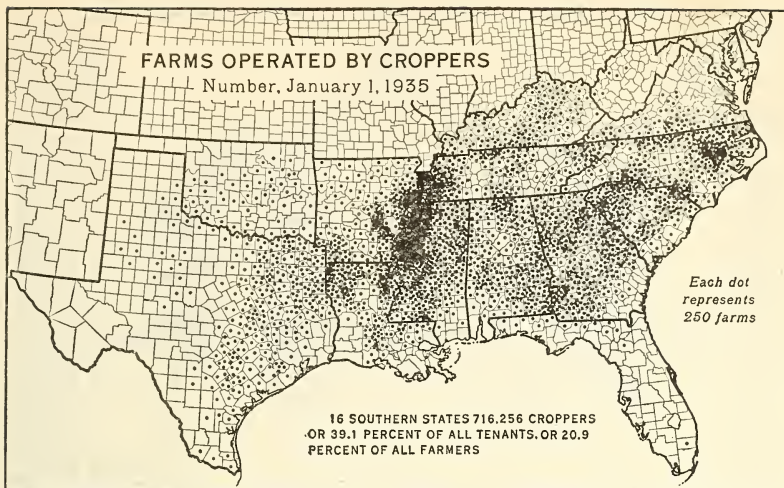


FIGURE 12.—In the South there are many farm workers classed as tenants because paid with a share of the crop, yet having little, if any, more capital than a farm laborer. These workers, who have to be supplied with their work stock by the landowner, and commonly advanced a loan to provide food and living expenses, are called croppers. They are most numerous in the rich river bottom lands of western Mississippi and eastern Arkansas, where cotton dominates; also in the adjacent delta counties of Missouri, which are not shown on the map. Recently the tendency is to convert the croppers in this area into ordinary wage laborers, the landowner taking all the risk and all the profit, if any. More than three-fourths of all croppers in the Nation grow cotton, and about a tenth, tobacco—note Kentucky and Virginia in the map above.

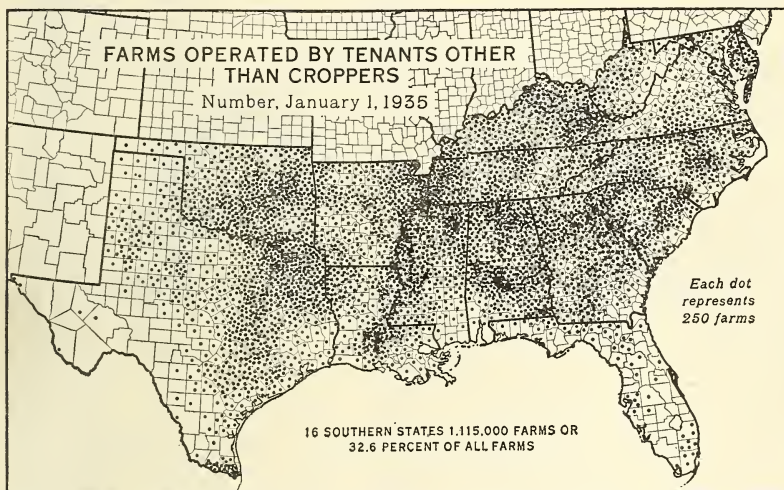


FIGURE 13.—Tenant farmers who own their work animals (practically all tenants of the North and West are of this class), are quite evenly distributed in the Southern States—much more evenly distributed than the croppers of the South. Sixty percent of the tenants of the South who own their work animals operate cotton farms, a much lower percentage than for croppers. Less than a fourth of the tenants of the South who farm with work stock of their own are colored, whereas over half of the croppers are colored.

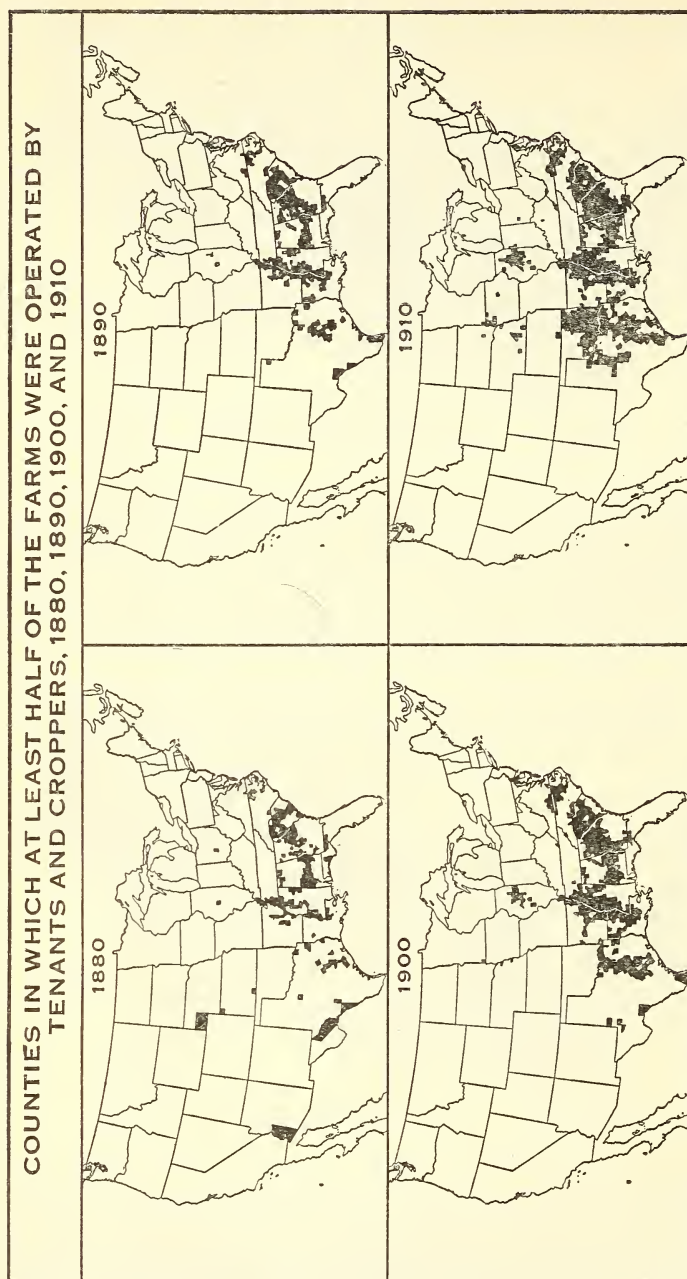


FIGURE 14.—Counties wherein at least half the farms were operated by tenants or croppers increased in number from 180 in 1880 to 252 in 1890, 381 in 1900, and 550 in 1910. Nearly all of these counties in 1910, as in 1880, were in the Southern States. In 1880 Illinois had 1 such county; in 1890, 2 counties; in 1900, 13 counties; and in 1910, 19 counties. By 1910 Iowa had seven such counties. But in the entire North and West there were only 49 counties, and among these were a half dozen cotton-growing counties in southeastern Missouri.

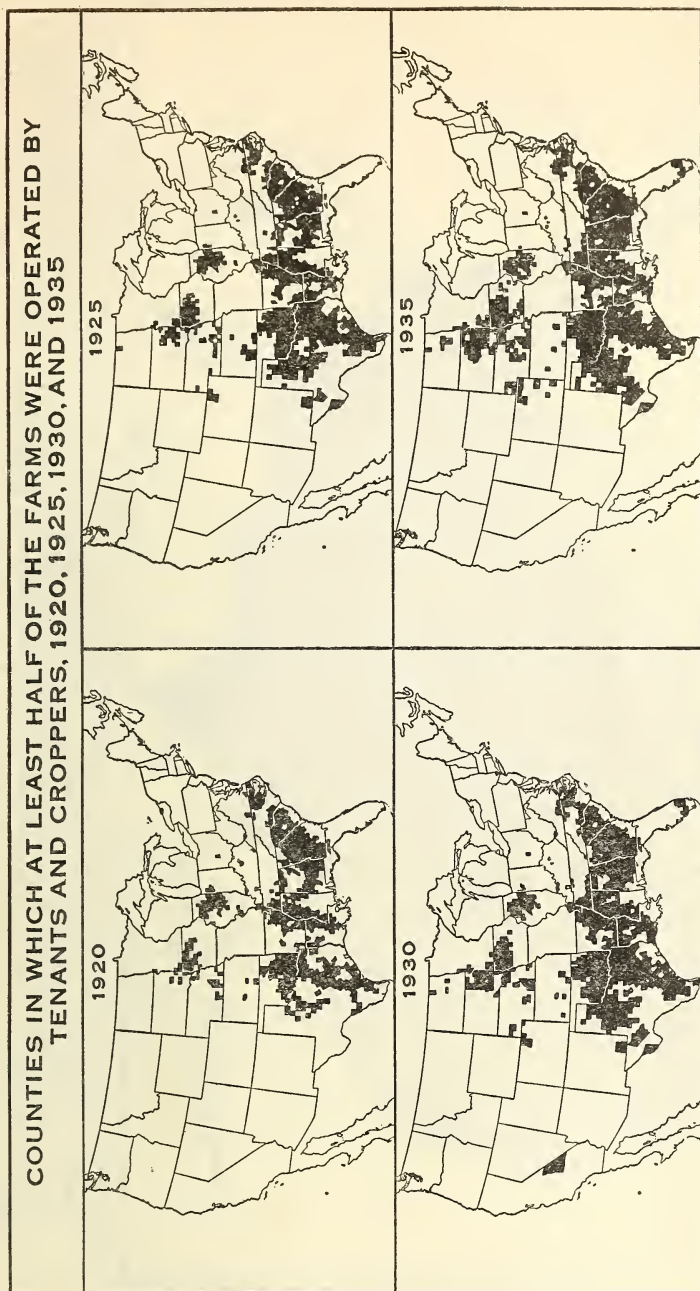


Figure 15.— Between 1920 and 1935 the increase in number of counties having at least half the farms operated by tenants or croppers took place mostly in the Corn Belt and western part of the Cotton Belt. In nearly all the counties in the Cotton Belt in 1935 more than half the farms were operated by tenants, as were over half in Iowa. However, in the entire North and West the total number of such counties was less than 200. These were located mostly in a few States, 53 in Iowa, 37 in Nebraska, 35 in Illinois, and 34 in South Dakota. A few counties, it will be noted, are located in the wheat areas. There were 585 of these counties in the Nation in 1920 where tenants were a majority, 727 in 1925, 820 in 1930, and 890 in 1935.

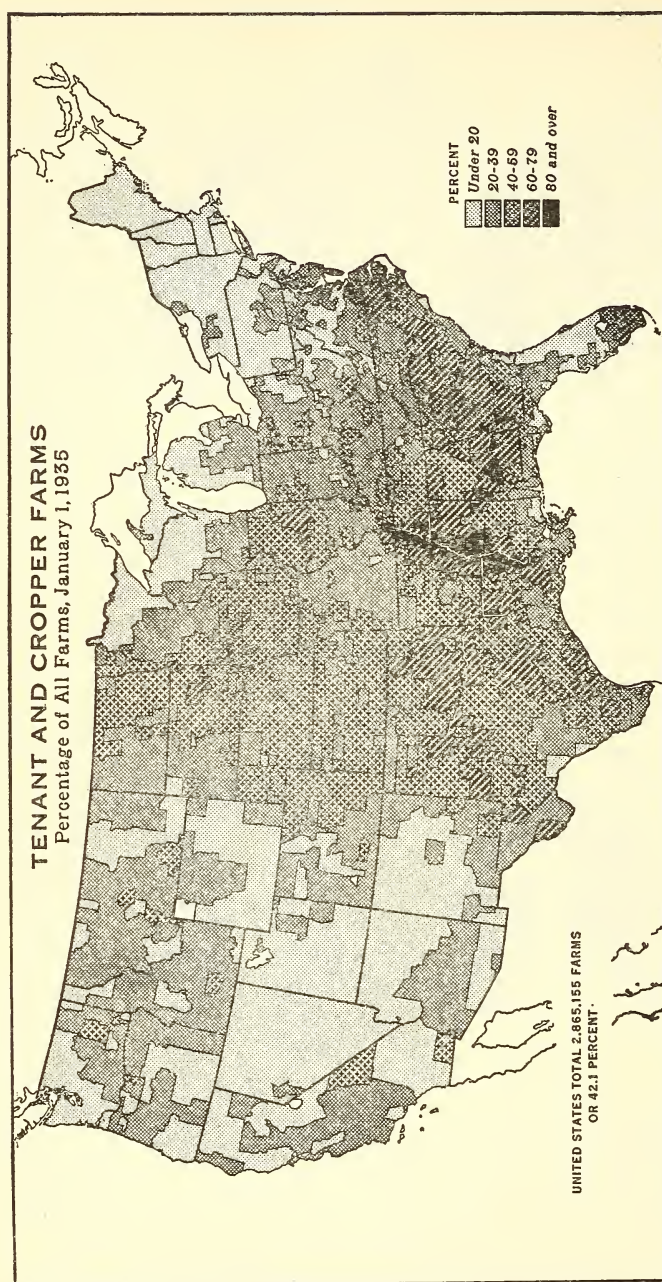


FIGURE 16.—The percentage of all farms that are tenant operated is relatively high in most areas where the major staple cash crops are largely grown, and relatively low where dairying, livestock production, fruit and vegetable growing, and subsistence types of farming are important. Success in these latter types is in part a matter of permanence of tenure, something that has so far been rather unimportant in producing the staple cash crops, cotton, wheat, and corn. Tenancy among the farmers is most general in the Cotton Belt, particularly in the more fertile parts. Outside of the Cotton Belt it is relatively high in the heart of the Corn Belt, and only a little lower in the less productive counties of this belt and in the more humid parts of the wheat areas.

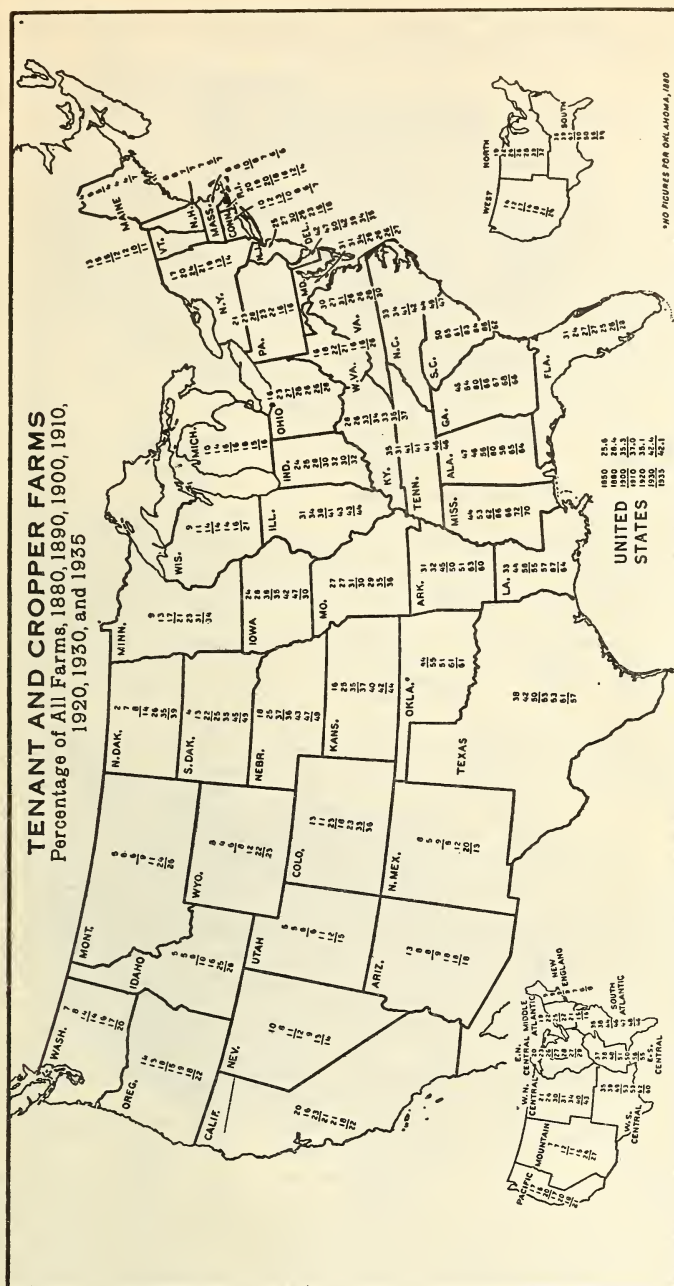


FIGURE 17.—The percentage of farms operated by tenants decreased between 1880 and 1935 in 11 eastern States—New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Florida. However, an increase occurred in these States, except Florida, between 1930 and 1935. The more outstanding increases between 1880 and 1935 were in North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas—all wheat-growing States, and States where pioneer farmers have been passing away—and in Mississippi, Arkansas, and Louisiana—all cotton-growing States. A greater proportion of farms of Iowa is now farmed by tenants than in any other northern State. However, the proportion is almost as high in South Dakota and Nebraska.

TREND IN NUMBER OF FARMS BY TENURE OF OPERATOR

Principal Divisions and Selected States, 1880-1935

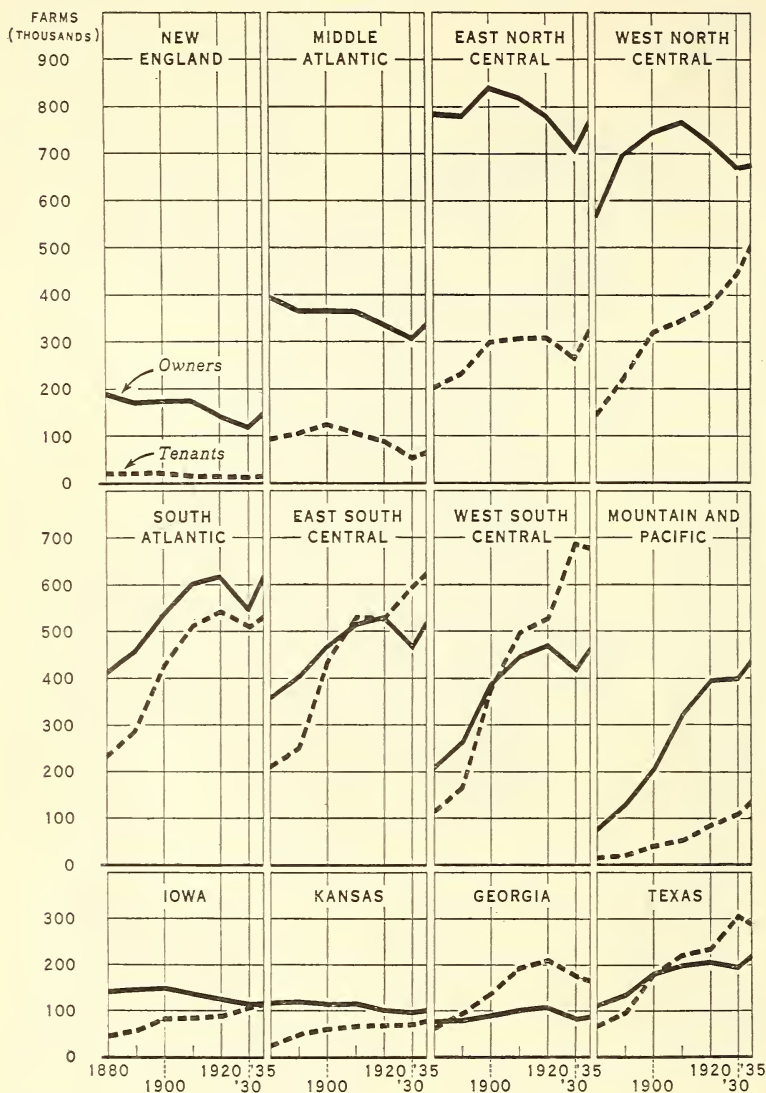


FIGURE 18.—During the years between 1880 and 1935 owner-operated farms changed less in number in most parts of the United States than tenant farms. In the New England, Middle Atlantic, and East North Central divisions, there were actually fewer farms operated by their owners in 1935 than in 1880. There were also fewer tenant-operated farms in the New England and Middle Atlantic divisions in 1935 than in 1880. But in the other divisions tenant farms increased decidedly. In the West North Central and the two South Central divisions the increase was several fold. Owner-operated farms were fewer in 1935 than in 1880 by nearly 30,000 in Iowa and by 18,000 in Kansas, but farms operated by tenants increased between these years 66,000 in Iowa and 54,000 in Kansas, more than doubling in Iowa, and more than trebling in Kansas. Iowa tenant farms are now as numerous as owner-operated farms. In Georgia tenant farms have outnumbered owner-operated farms since 1890 and in Texas since 1900.

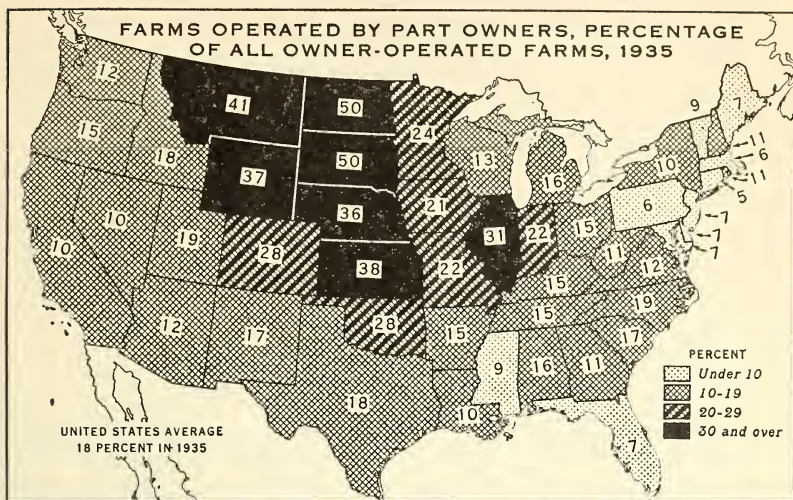


FIGURE 19.—The opportunities that owner farmers have of renting additional land and the need for such land, are greatest where dry farming has been pressing in on grazing land. By renting former dry-land homesteads and similar acreage, cattle ranchers have been able to increase their herds and grain producers to utilize large-scale equipment more effectively. The extent to which lands usable for grazing and grain production belong to absentee owners is also a factor. Half of the owner farmers of the Dakotas rent additional land, over two-fifths of those in Montana, three-eighths of those in Nebraska, Kansas, and Wyoming, and nearly a third of those in Illinois. Of the owner farmers of the West North Central States 21 percent rented additional land in 1900, 24 percent in 1910 and 1920, 26 percent in 1925, 31 percent in 1930, and 30 percent in 1935.

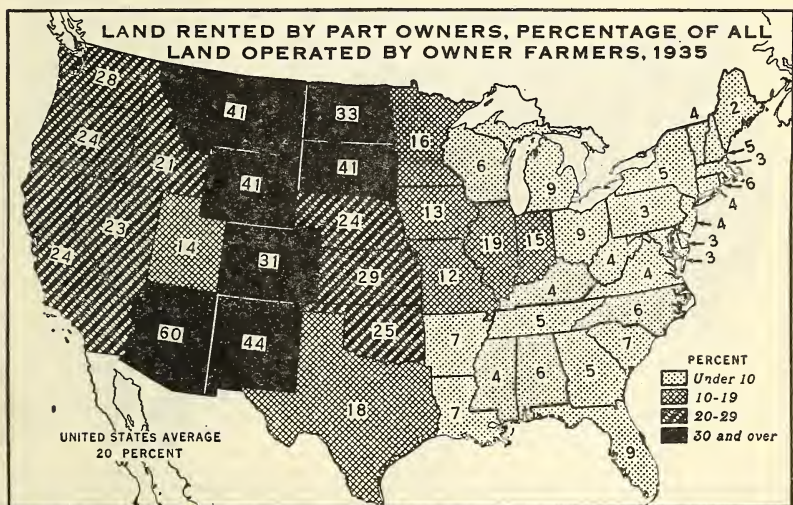


FIGURE 20.—To an increasing extent farm land operated by owners is being supplemented by outside rented land. Particularly is this the case in the Great Plains and Rocky Mountain regions. The proportion of such land in owner-operated farms was approximately a tenth in 1900 and in 1910 in the United States as a whole, but it was a fifth in 1930 and 1935. In the West North Central States the proportion increased from one-sixth in 1900 to one-fourth in 1935; in the Rocky Mountain States from 13 percent in 1910 to 39 percent in 1935. The location of the States in which a large proportion of the land in owner-operated farms is rented indicates that much of this rented land is used for grazing, or for small-grain and other extensive types of crop production.

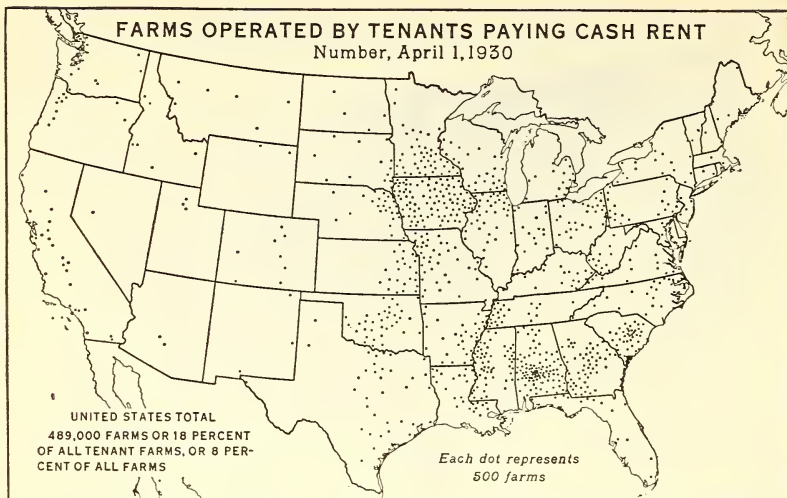


FIGURE 21.—Cash-rented farms are rather sparsely distributed since share renting is generally preferred. However, there are everywhere some farms that are difficult to rent satisfactorily on a share basis and some landlords who prefer to rent on a cash basis. Centering in Iowa is a section where many highly desirable farms are rented for cash to a highly responsible class of tenants. By contrast many of the farms of Alabama rented in 1930 on a cash basis were small, undesirable farms rented to tenants who commonly had to have the loan or rental of work animals and advances on which to live while making their crops. The downward trend of prices of farm products from the World War to the depths of the depression caused heavy losses to cash tenants.

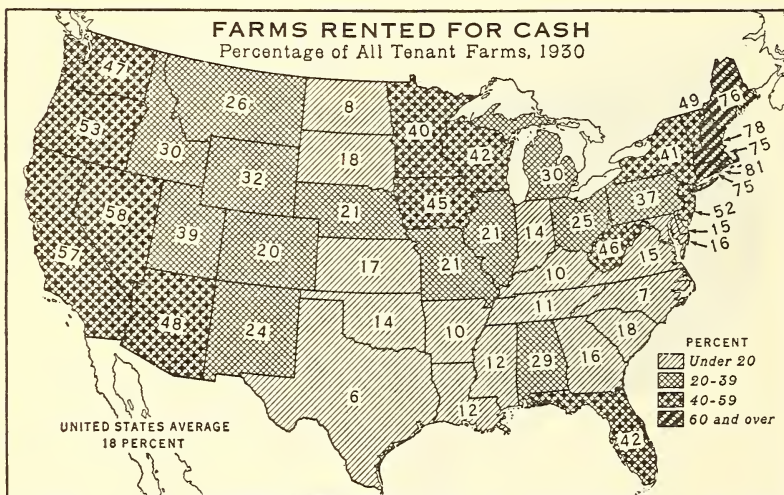


FIGURE 22.—Although cash tenants are most numerous in the Corn Belt and Cotton Belt, they constitute a large proportion of all tenants in the Dairy Belt, the Pacific Coast States, Nevada, Arizona, and Florida. In general, the lower the rate of farm tenancy the higher the proportion of tenants who pay cash rent. The four States with the lowest rate of farm tenancy in 1930 were among the five where over seven-tenths of the tenants paid cash rent, and in Rhode Island, the other State, the rate of farm tenancy was also quite low. Iowa and Alabama are exceptions, in that more of the tenant farms are rented for cash than might be expected from the general relationship of tenancy and cash renting in other States.

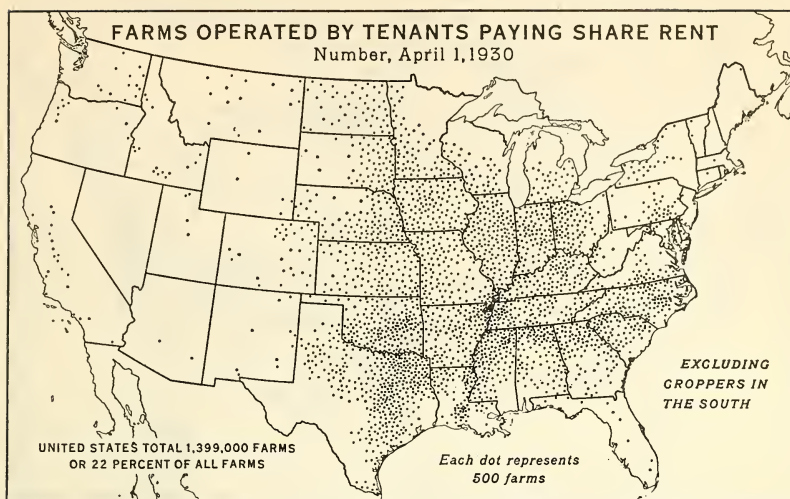


FIGURE 23.—This map shows the distribution of tenants other than those paying cash rent in the North and West; in the South it shows the distribution of tenants who are neither croppers nor cash renters. The greatest numbers of share tenants are found where cotton, tobacco, corn, wheat, and oats are important crops. Most of these tenants pay a share of the staple marketable crops they grow as rent. Some pay a cash rent in addition for the land they use but do not put into staple crops. These share-cash tenants are found mostly in the Corn Belt. Some dairy and some corn-hog-cattle farms are rented on terms that call for sharing the increase in livestock and the sales of livestock and livestock products.

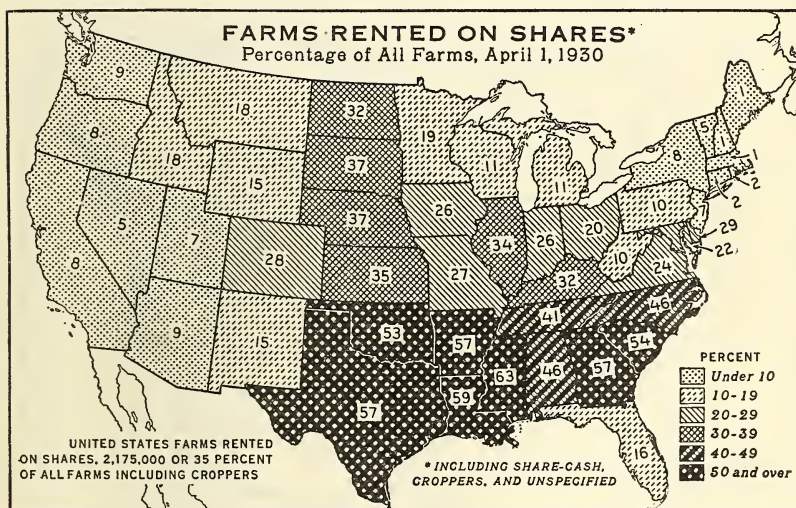


FIGURE 24.—In most of the Cotton Belt more than half of all farms were tenant and cropper farms rented on shares in 1930. In Illinois, Kentucky, Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakotas about a third of all farms were tenant farms rented on shares; in Virginia, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, and Colorado about a fourth; but in New England, New York, New Jersey, the Pacific Coast States, Utah, Nevada, and Arizona, less than one-tenth of all farms were rented on shares. Share renting is not only the dominant system of renting farms, except in New England, New Jersey, Oregon, California and Nevada, but also it is the dominant system of tenure, measured by number of farms, in seven Southern States.

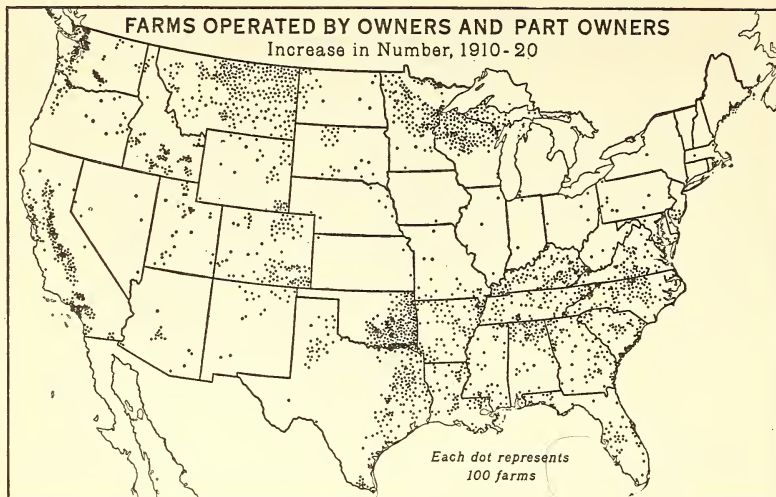


FIGURE 25.—In the period between 1910 and 1920 the frontiers of farming were still being pushed back to the upper Lakes region, in the drier sections of the Great Plains, and even in parts of the South and far West. Most of the pioneer farming is done by farm owners, and during these years many new farms appeared in the cut-over lands of the Lakes States, in Oklahoma, where the acquisition of land ownership had been made possible in what had been Indian Territory, also in many of the sparsely settled and in the irrigated areas of the West. In California, as a result of the active subdivision of large places for purposes of sale to aspiring farmers, many new owner-operated farms were made. In the South increases in owner-operated farms, except in east Texas, were usually accompanied by increases rather than decreases in farms operated by tenants.

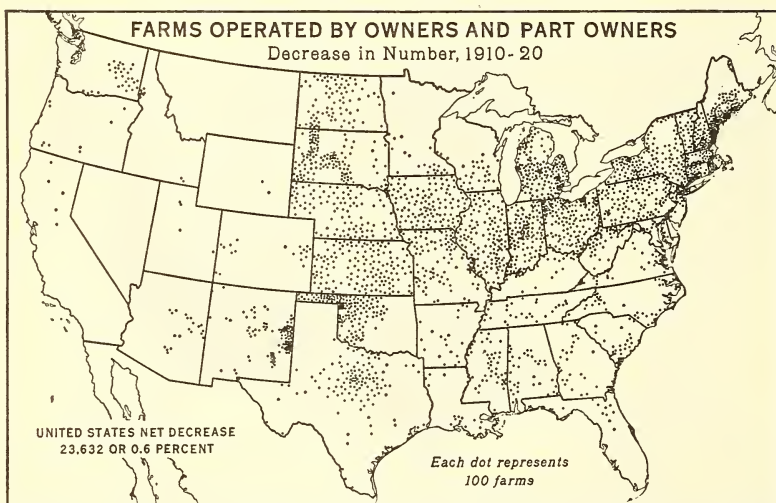


FIGURE 26.—Aside from the cut-over area of the Lakes States, decreases in the number of farms operated by owners and part owners were general throughout the Northern States between 1910 and 1920, also in north-central Texas and western Oklahoma. Part of this decrease was due to the movement toward consolidation of farms, particularly in the Corn Belt and Wheat Belt; but tenancy was increasing in many of the counties of these belts, the number of tenant farms often showing an increase in the face of a decrease in the total number of farms. In the North Atlantic States, in the southern portions of the East North Central States, and in most of Missouri tenant-operated farms as well as owner-operated farms decreased in number, with decreases or minor increases in the percentage of farms operated by tenants.

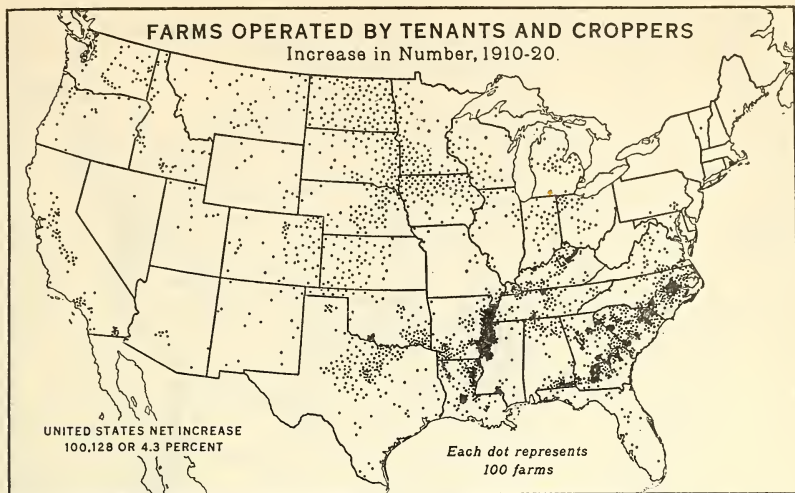


FIGURE 27.—In the coastal plain section of the Southeastern States, where fertilizer was being extensively used, and in the rich alluvial-soil counties of the Mississippi Delta, where land was being drained, the heaviest increases in numbers of farms operated by tenants and croppers occurred in the period between 1910 and 1920. In both areas cotton acreage was being expanded by employing tenants, many of whom had fled from other sections because of the devastations caused by the boll weevil. The expansion of cotton production in north-central Texas was accompanied by an increase in numbers of farms operated by tenants and croppers and a decrease in the number of farms operated by owners and part owners. In the western part of the Corn Belt and in the Wheat Belt tenant farms were also increasing at the expense of owner-operated farms.

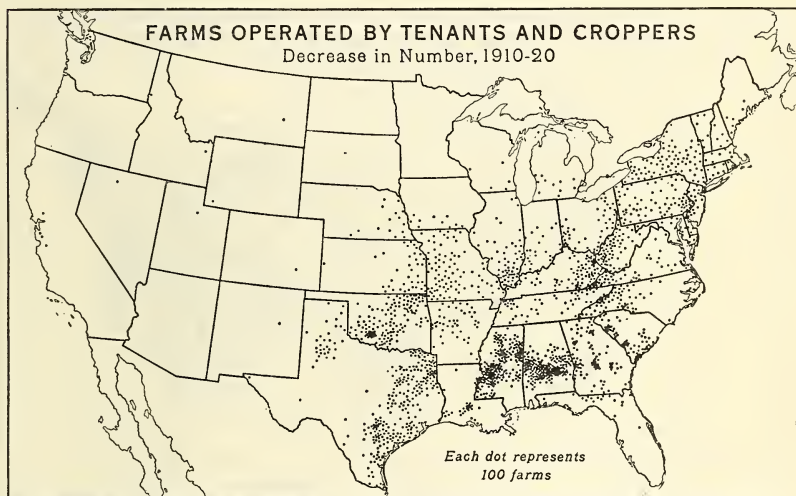


FIGURE 28.—Notable decreases in the number of farms operated by tenants and croppers occurred between 1910 and 1920 in those parts of the Cotton Belt that had suffered most from the ravages of the boll weevil, namely, the uplands of Mississippi, and the Black Prairie counties of the eastern part of that State, and of central Alabama. In eastern Kentucky and eastern Texas decreases in number of farms operated by tenants were generally accompanied by increases in number of owner-operated farms; in other words, by a bettering of tenure status. But elsewhere the decline in tenant farms was generally accompanied by a decrease in owner-operated farms, indicating the abandonment of farm land, or, less frequently, the enlargement of farms.

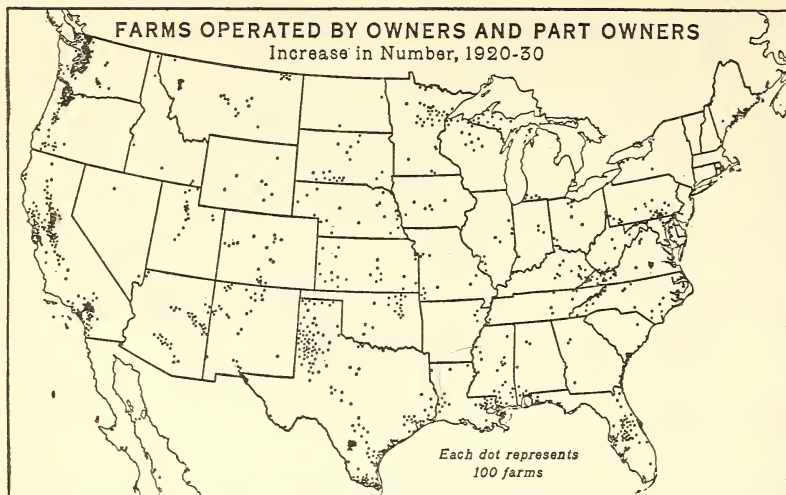


FIGURE 29.—During the decade of urban prosperity, 1920 to 1930, the increase in number of farms operated by owners and part owners was small, and largely confined to newly developing farming districts, notably the upper Great Lakes area, the Texas Panhandle, where cattle ranches were being divided into cotton and grain farms, and the advancing fruit and truck districts in central Florida and the lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas, including the "winter garden" district. The greatest increases of all were in the valleys of the Pacific Coast States, where cattle and grain and other large farms were being broken up into small fruit, truck, poultry, and part-time farms. The increase in Pennsylvania and the southern Appalachians may also have been largely part-time farms.

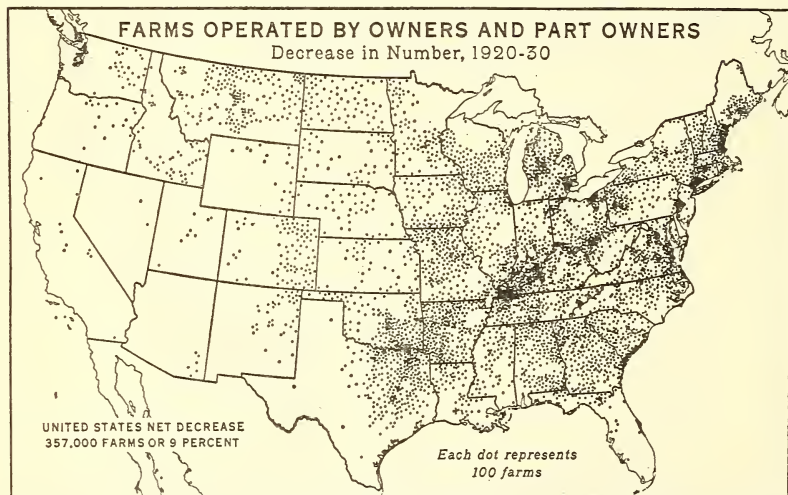


FIGURE 30.—Decreases in farms operated by owners and part owners were numerous and widespread between 1920 and 1930. Particularly notable were the decreases in New England and near New York City, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Detroit, and Cincinnati. This may have been owing in part to purchase of farm land for residential purposes. In western Kentucky the decrease may be attributed in part to the decline in tobacco production. The very general decrease in the South was only in part accompanied by an increase in tenant farms (fig. 31). Viewing the Nation as a whole, the major factor in the widespread decline doubtless was the prosperity in the cities, while prices for farm products remained relatively low. Old farmers died and often their children had gone to town; hence consolidations and abandonments.

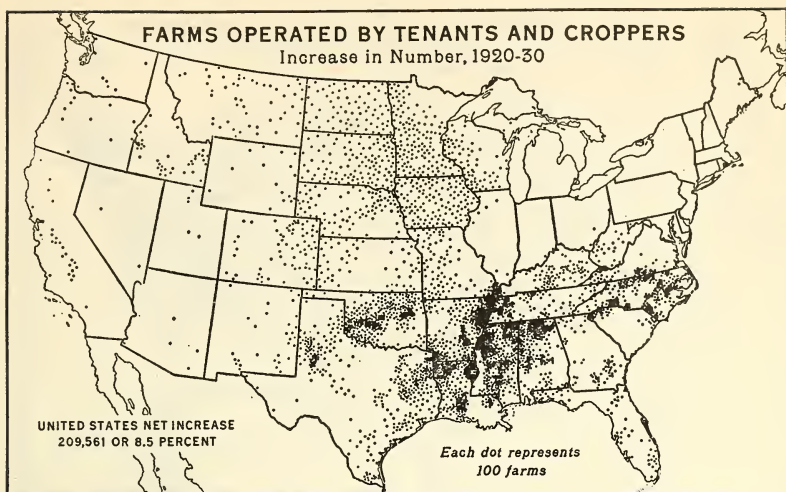


FIGURE 31.—Scarcely a county from Illinois to Maine and Maryland reported an increase in tenant farms between 1920 and 1930. But from Wisconsin to Montana and Colorado there was a widespread increase, doubtless associated with the death or retirement of many pioneer farmers. The increase in tenant farms, however, was heaviest in certain parts of the South, notably in the rich river-bottom lands where cotton predominates and where most tenant farms are managed in groups as plantations. Here farmers had learned to grow cotton profitably despite the presence of the boll weevil. Tenant farms increased also in the South where the weevil damage had not become serious—note the increases along the northern margin of the Cotton Belt in North Carolina, where tobacco was also a factor, and in Oklahoma and the Texas Panhandle.

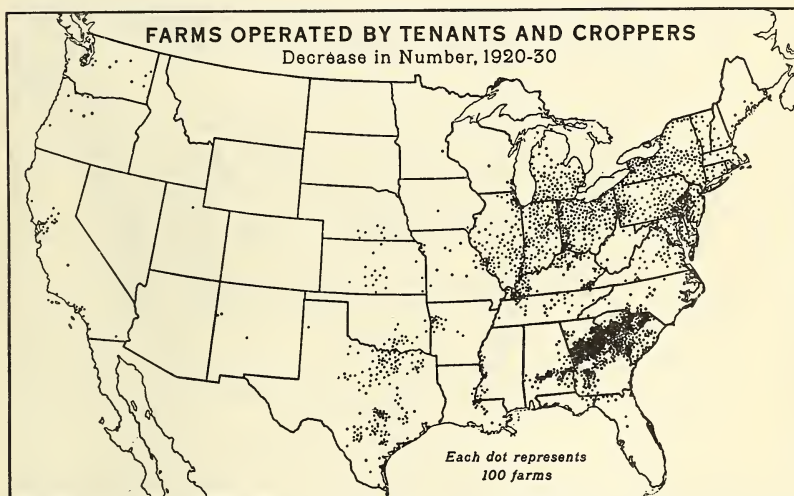


FIGURE 32.—The decrease in tenant farms between 1920 and 1930 was almost universal in the States from Illinois to Maine and Maryland, and was notably heavy in southeastern Pennsylvania. But much more intensive was the decrease in the Piedmont of Georgia and South Carolina. Here the ravages of the boll weevil and of soil erosion, also other factors, caused the abandonment of thousands of farms and consolidation of others. The decrease in total number of farms was about 50,000 in the Piedmont areas of these States during the decade. In the Northeastern States, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan the decrease in tenant farms, also in owner-operated farms, was mostly the result of consolidation of farms.

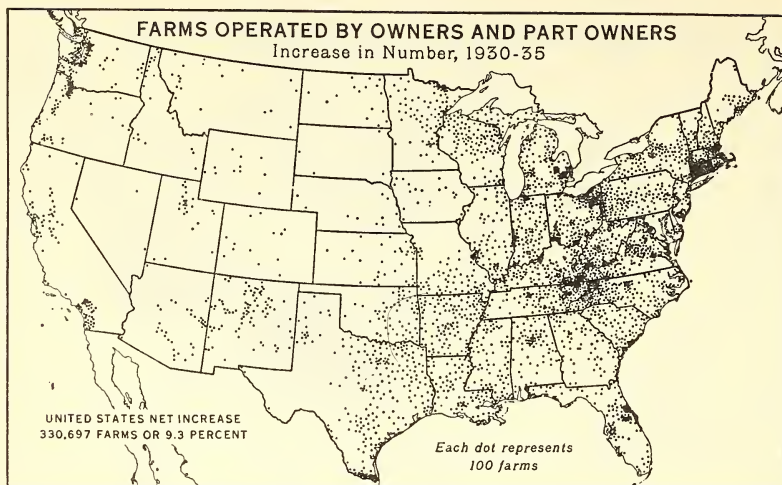


FIGURE 33.—Among the hundreds of thousands of families turning to the land for a living between 1930 and 1935, because of unemployment, many had saved enough to buy farms. But usually they had to buy farms of such low value that they could expect little more than subsistence. Such farms are typical in the Appalachian area, and it was here that the most notable increase in owner-operated farms took place. Many of these farms were near towns and cities where partial employment for some member of the family could be obtained. Part of the increase in southern New England, notably Connecticut, is attributable to inclusion of small places as farms in 1935 which were not considered farms in 1930. Increases in owner-operated farms were slight in high-tenancy areas and where farms are of high average value.

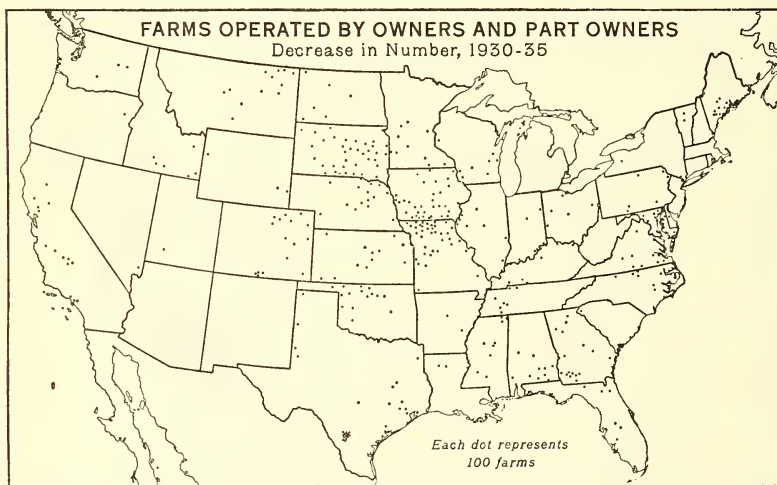


FIGURE 34.—Notwithstanding the many foreclosures of mortgages on farm properties between 1930 and 1935, a situation which extended throughout the country, there are relatively few counties where a net decrease occurred in the number of owner and part-owner farms. This is to be explained largely by the activity of the market for cheap properties suitable for occupancy by families driven by the depression in industry and commerce to seek a living in the country, and having some money or credit with which to buy. Counties where there was a net decrease in numbers of owner operators were counties where this landward movement was slight in comparison with the numbers of farms abandoned by owners or foreclosed.

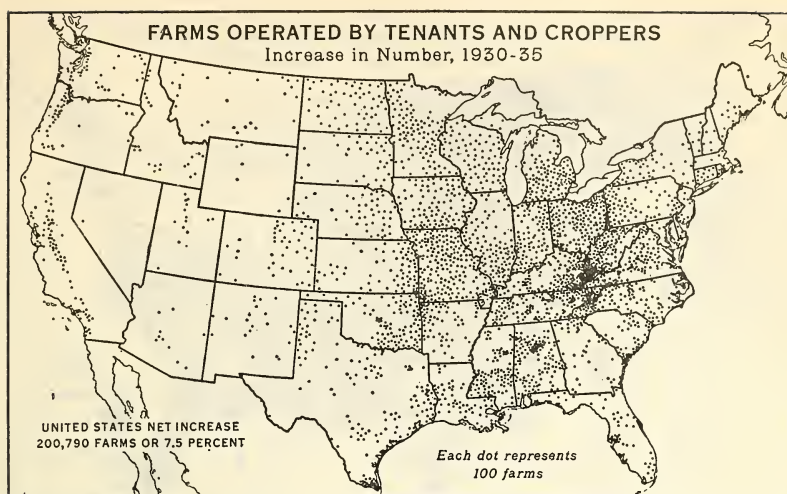


FIGURE 35.—There was a net increase in number of tenant farms between 1930 and 1935 in most counties throughout the Nation. To a disproportionate extent the counties reporting an increase were those with less than the average rate of farm tenancy. In most of these counties the number of owner-operated farms also increased, but not fast enough to keep the rate of farm tenancy from rising, often quite sharply. In southern Iowa and northern Missouri the increase in the number of tenant farms about equaled the decrease in number of owner-operated farms, suggesting changes to tenancy following the foreclosure of owner-operated farms. In much of the South, particularly in the Cotton Belt, where the rate of farm tenancy is high, the number of tenant and cropper-operated farms increased but slightly or not at all.

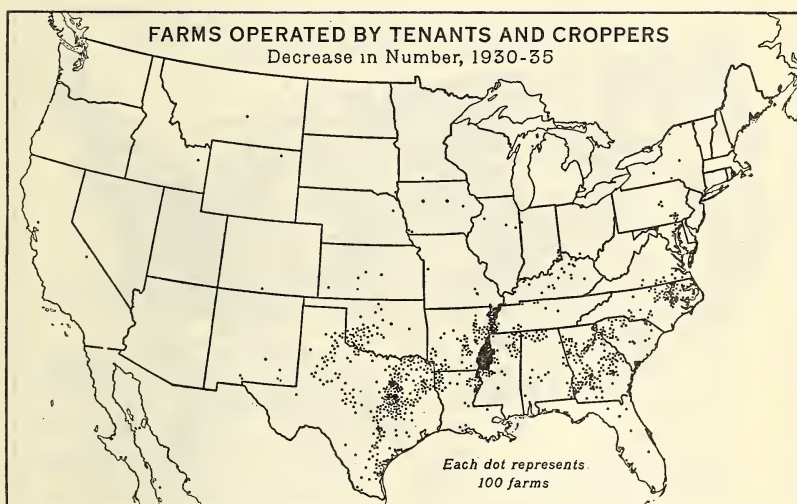


FIGURE 36.—The decrease between 1930 and 1935 in number of farms operated by tenants and croppers was confined almost wholly to cotton- and tobacco-growing counties in the South. Although these decreases in number of tenant and cropper farms were frequently considerable, as in the Yazoo Delta and the Texas Black Prairie, the percentage of the farms operated by tenants and croppers remained high. Some of these former tenants and croppers became wage hands on the plantations or on other farms, and some moved to the towns and cities. Many are receiving relief. Very few became farm owners. The tendency in economic status was generally downward.

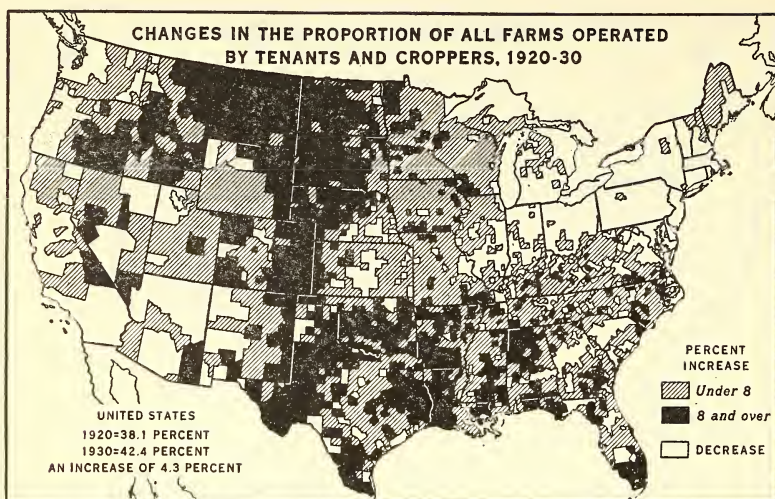


FIGURE 37.—Despite the increase in farms operated by tenants and croppers from 38.1 percent of all farms in 1920 to 42.4 percent in 1930 in the Nation as a whole, farm tenancy was on the decrease in the greater part of the Northeastern States, in the Piedmont of the Southeastern States, and along the Pacific coast. Gains in farm tenancy were highest in the spring wheat region, the western portion of the winter-wheat region, and in the western half of the Cotton Belt. In these regions many pioneer farmers had retired or had died, and the children had moved to the cities. In either case the farms might be rented rather than sold. The commercial character of the agriculture in these regions also favored tenancy.

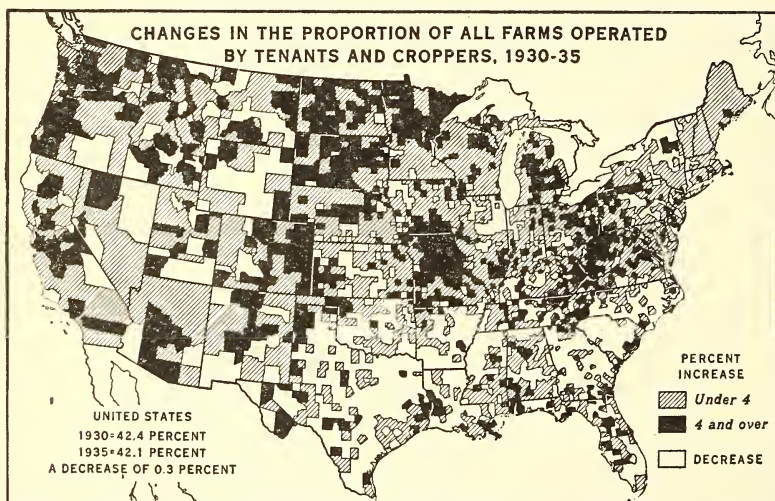


FIGURE 38.—Although the percentage of the farms which were operated by tenants and croppers decreased between 1930 and 1935 in the United States as a whole from 42.4 to 42.1 percent, this decrease was almost confined to the Cotton Belt, and in over two-thirds of the counties of the Nation the percentage increased. Over seven-tenths of the counties reporting a decrease were in the South. On the other hand, in the Northeastern States, where the proportion of the farms operated by tenants had been decreasing since the beginning of the century, an increase occurred. The increase was heavy in the Appalachian region, in southern Iowa and much of Missouri, in the spring-wheat region, and in many counties of the far West.

PERCENTAGE OF FARMS OPERATED BY TENANTS AND CROPPERS

Census Years, 1900-35

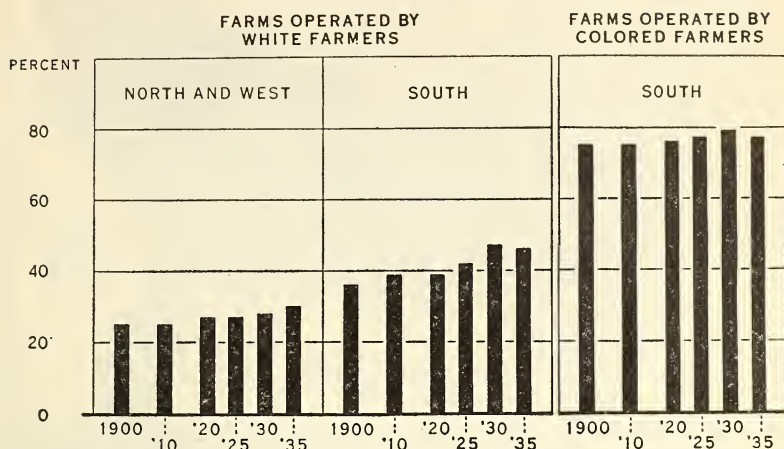


FIGURE 39.—Among white farmers the rate of tenancy is highest in the South and increased most rapidly there prior to 1935. Tenants were 36 percent of the white farmers of the South in 1900, 39 percent in 1910 and 1920, 47 percent in 1930, and 46 percent in 1935. Tenants were 25 percent of the white farmers of the North and West in 1900 and 1910, 27 percent in 1920, 28 percent in 1930, and 30 percent in 1935. The rate of tenancy among the colored farmers of the South has changed but little and has been continuously high—75 percent in 1900 and 1910, 76 in 1920, 79 in 1930, and 77 percent in 1935. A majority of the white tenants now farm in the South, but in 1900 this was not the case.

NUMBER OF TENANT FARMERS AND PERCENTAGE OPERATING AS CROPPERS, 16 SOUTHERN STATES, 1920-35

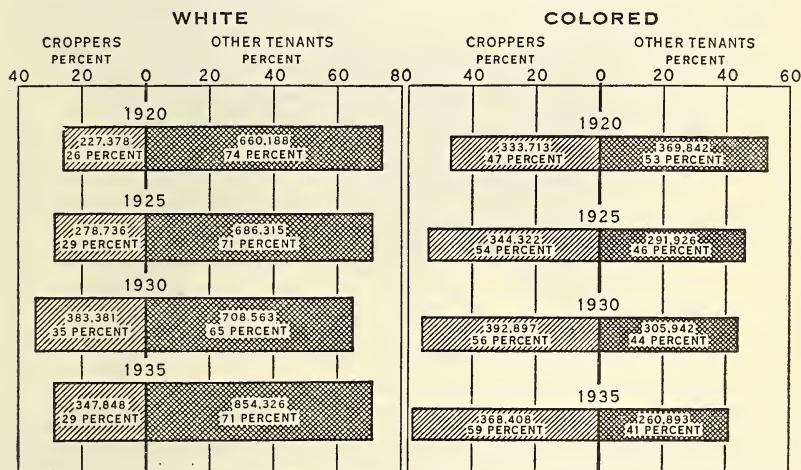


FIGURE 40.—White tenants and croppers in the South between 1920 and 1935 increased 35 percent, whereas colored tenants and croppers decreased 11 percent. White tenants and croppers now outnumber the colored almost 2 to 1. Moreover, the remaining colored tenants and croppers have been less successful than the whites in resisting the trend toward the lower status of cropper. Although there were about 74,000 fewer colored tenants and croppers in 1935 than in 1920, 35,000 more worked as croppers in 1935 as compared with 56 percent in 1930, 54 percent in 1925, and 47 percent in 1920. The width of the bars in the graph above varies with the number of farmers.

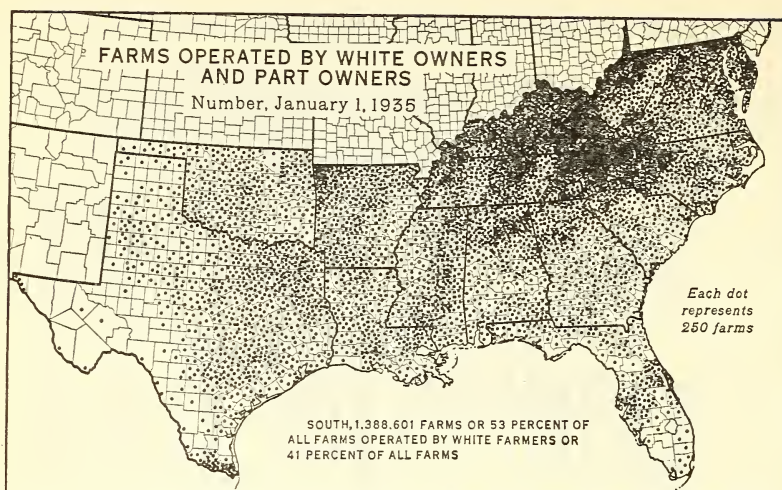


FIGURE 41.—Throughout West Virginia, western North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, and elsewhere in the South where the land is hilly or mountainous, or where the soil is poor and much farming is on a subsistence basis, most of the farms are operated by their white owners. (Compare figs. 41, 42, 43, 44, 47, and 48.) Such farms are more numerous in these less productive areas than in the Cotton Belt. Seven-eighths of the farms of the South operated by their owners are operated by whites.

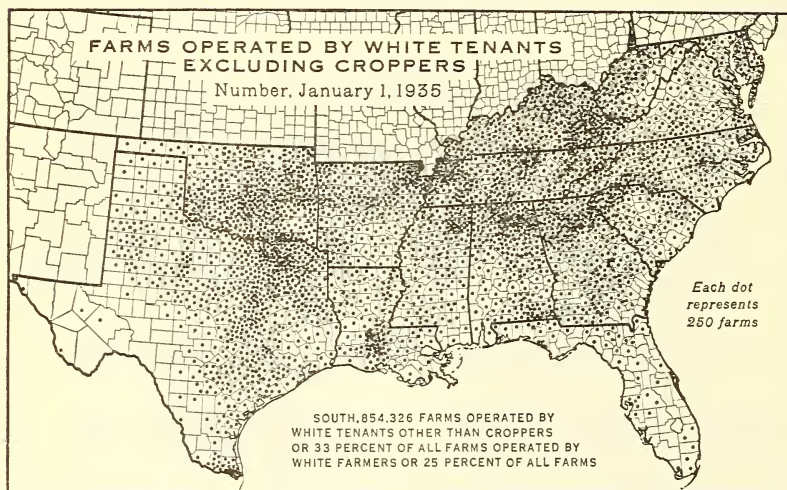


FIGURE 42.—White tenants other than croppers, that is, white tenant farmers who have work stock of their own, are more uniformly distributed over the South than are white owner operators or white croppers, also more uniformly than any of the several tenure classes of colored farmers. Where colored tenants are numerous in the Cotton Belt, white tenants with work animals of their own are generally few. Such white tenants are numerous, however, in much of the Cotton Belt where there are few colored tenants or croppers. (Compare with figs. 44 and 48.) In the mountainous portions of the South there are fewer white tenants than owner operators.

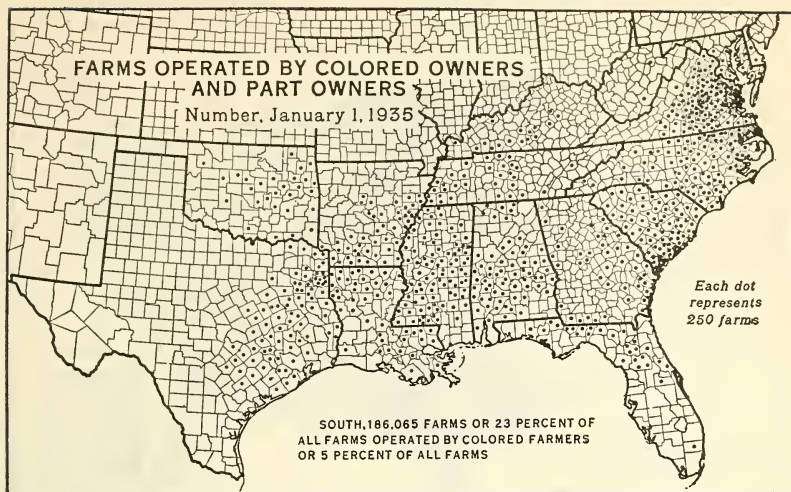


FIGURE 43.—Colored owner operators, including part owners, are not numerous in most of the South. The largest number are found in eastern Virginia and southeastern South Carolina, where Negro ownership became established in reconstruction days. Farms in Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Florida, operated by colored owners outnumber those of colored tenants and croppers, but in the rest of the South the ratio is reversed, most decidedly reversed in the Cotton Belt. In 1935, farms operated by colored owners were not separately tabulated in the Northern and Western States, where only 10 percent of the national total are located. In 1930, 60 percent of the colored farmers of the North and West owned their farms, as compared with 21 percent in the South.

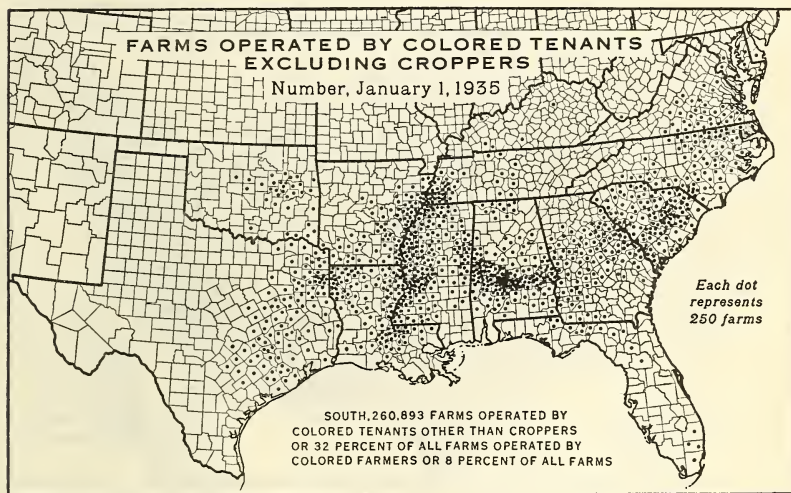


FIGURE 44.—Colored farmers in the South who own their work stock but not their farms are located mostly in the eastern and central portions of the Cotton Belt. There are very few of these farmers or colored farmers of any kind in central and western Texas, few in the mountainous parts of the South, rather few in the lower coastal plain. Between 1930 and 1935 the number of colored tenants who owned, or who nominally owned their work stock decreased about 45,000 in the South. This decrease was offset only in small part by the increase of 4,000 in numbers of colored farmers who owned their farms. Nor was it offset by any increase in numbers of colored croppers. In the South there were about 24,000 fewer colored croppers operating farms in 1935 than in 1930.

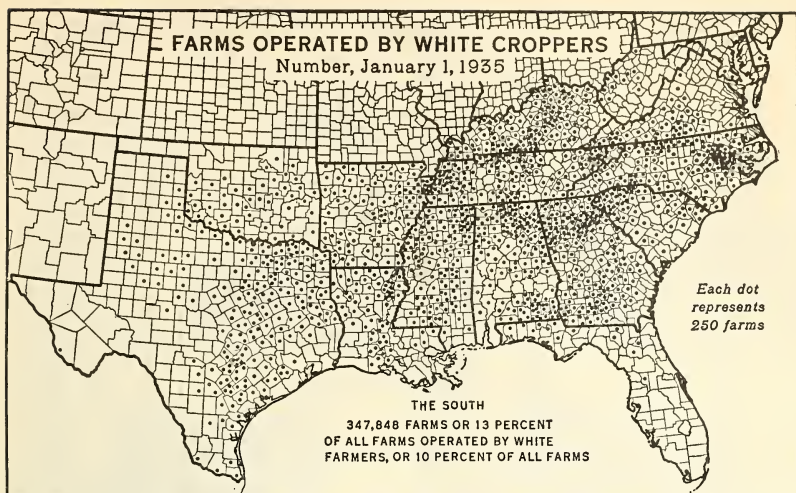


FIGURE 47.—In the South many families, even among the whites, are so poor that they cannot own a mule, its harness, and the few implements of a small cotton farm. Without ownership of these things the status of a farmer may be achieved nevertheless by the head of the family becoming a cropper under a landlord willing to supply the mule, harness, and implements, and even advances for food on which to live, along with land to farm on shares and a house in which to live. White croppers are much more evenly distributed over the Cotton Belt than colored croppers. In the rest of the South white croppers are also numerous, but colored croppers hardly find employment at all. White croppers are to be found even where farming is largely of a subsistence character.

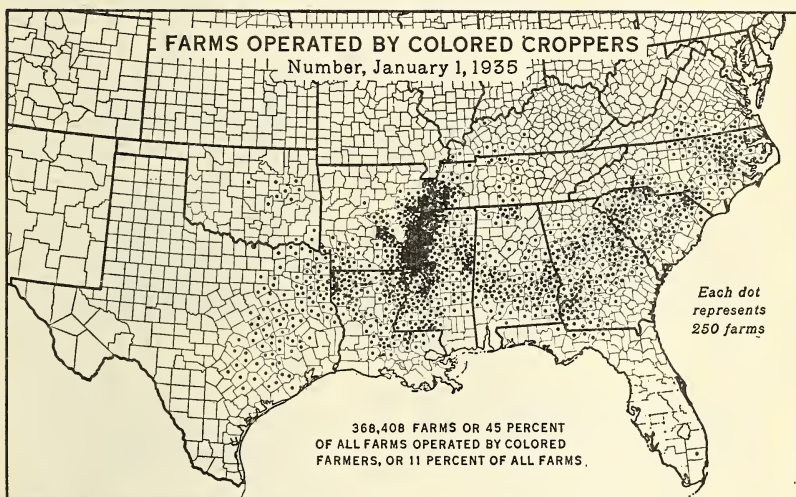


FIGURE 48.—Most of the colored croppers of the South are in the Cotton Belt, with the greatest concentration in the Yazoo Delta of Mississippi and adjacent bottom lands of Arkansas. Here the land is of high fertility, mostly in cultivation, and largely organized into plantations. Tenants farming the subdivisions of these plantations are mostly colored and are closely supervised, particularly those with cropper status. Colored croppers also work many cotton farms in the lower Piedmont and upper coastal plain sections of the Southeastern States, and tobacco farms in North Carolina and southern Virginia. With colored farmers the cropper status is generally permanent; many seek work as croppers in their old age, whereas white farmers by that time commonly achieve ownership, if they farm at all.

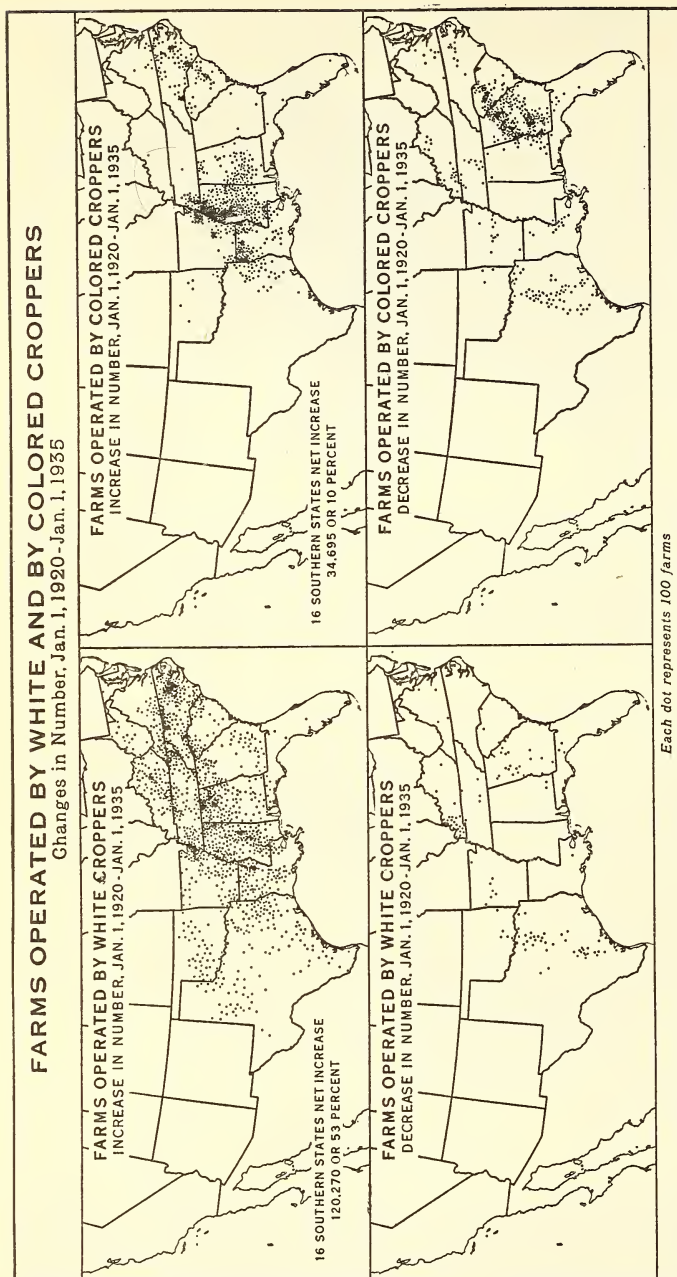


FIGURE 49.—To a disproportionate extent increases in number of croppers in the South between 1920 and 1935 were increases in white croppers. Aside from counties in which there never were many croppers, because of the nature of the agriculture, and aside from counties where there was heavy abandonment of land for farming, such as occurred in western Kentucky and central Georgia, increases in number of white croppers were widely distributed over the South—much more so than the increase of colored croppers. White croppers increased in number even in many of the counties wherein most farmers, particularly those of cropper status, were colored. Colored croppers increased also in most of these counties, but generally in the Piedmont of Georgia and South Carolina colored croppers decreased. White croppers also decreased in the central Piedmont, but much less than the colored croppers, and in the upper Piedmont white croppers increased in number.

SIZE OF FARM IN RELATION TO TENURE OF FARMER

Farms of the South Compared with Farms of the North and West, 1900 and 1930

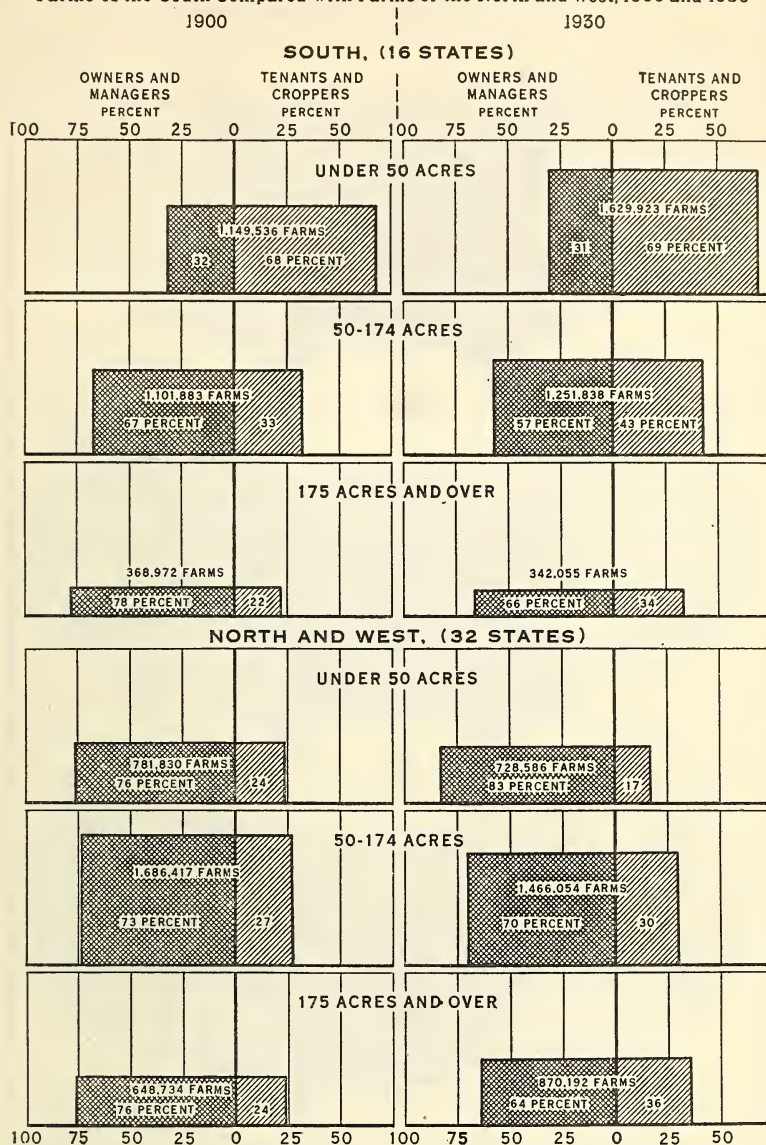


FIGURE 50.—There was not much change between 1900 and 1930 in the rate of tenancy in the South on farms of less than 50 acres, but such was the increase in numbers of these small farms and such the rate of tenancy on them in 1900 that the rate of tenancy on farms for the country as a whole was given a decidedly upward trend. Of the net increase in numbers of all farms in the Nation during the 30 years, almost seven-eighths are accounted for in the increase in southern farms of less than 50 acres in size. In the North and West there were fewer small farms in 1930 than in 1900 and on these small farms the rate of tenancy declined decidedly. The greatest increases in the rate of tenancy in the North and West, as well as in the South, occurred on farms of the larger sizes. In the South on farms of 175 acres and over, 22 percent were tenant-operated in 1900, 34 percent in 1930; in the North and West on farms of this size 24 percent were tenant-operated in 1900, 36 percent in 1930.

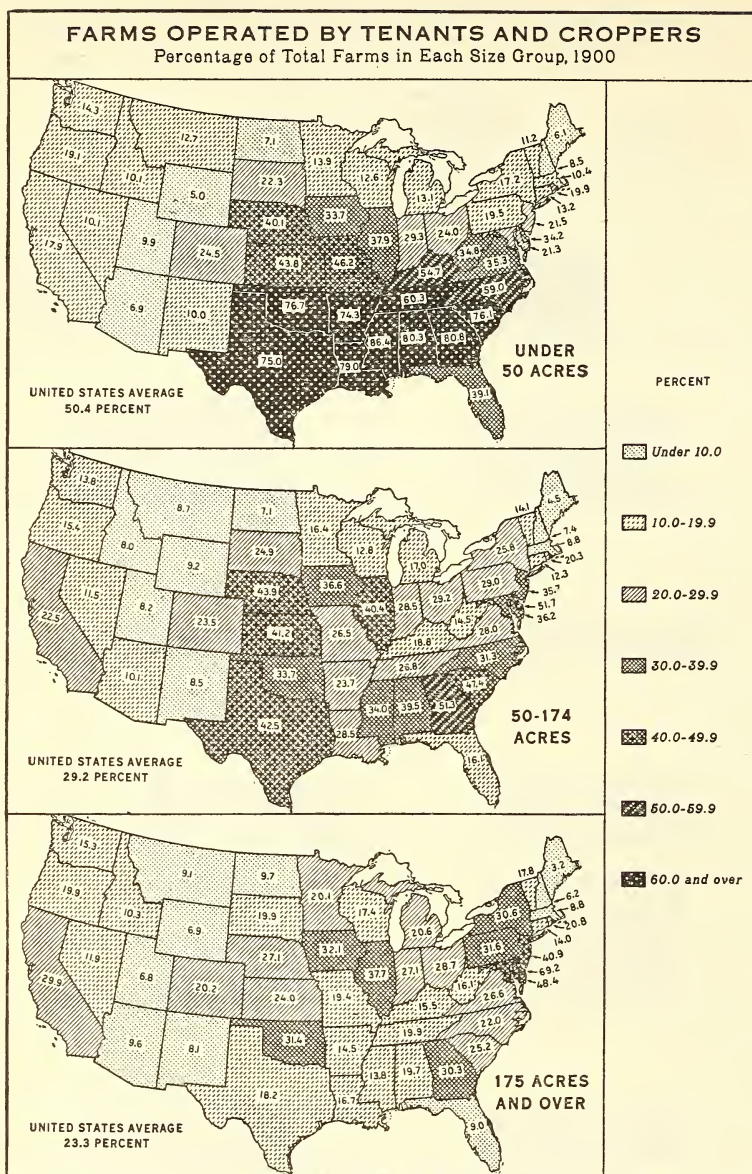


FIGURE 51.—On farms of less than 50 acres the rate of tenancy in 1900 exceeded 50 percent in the 10 more important cotton-growing States and in Kentucky. In most of the States the rate of tenancy on such small farms was higher in 1900 than in 1930, and notable decreases were the rule rather than the exception in the older agricultural States (fig. 52). On farms of larger size increases in the rate of tenancy were the rule rather than the exception, except the Northeastern States, where the decline in rate of tenancy was notable (except in Maine). In 1900 rates of tenancy on farms of 175 acres and over were low in all but a few States, and particularly low by comparison with the rates general over the South on farms of less than 50 acres.

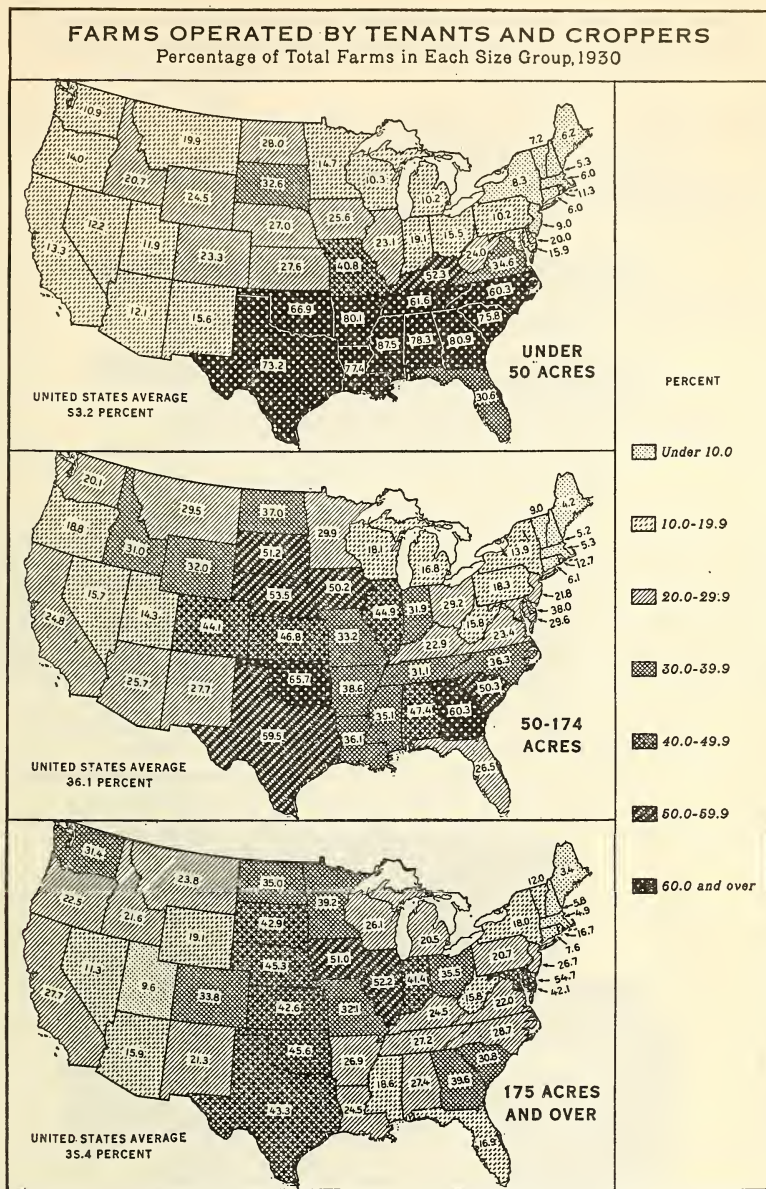


FIGURE 52.—On farms of less than 50 acres in size the 10 most important cotton-growing States and Kentucky held the same somewhat unenviable first place in tenancy in 1930, as in 1900 (fig. 51). On farms of 50 to 174 acres, however, a considerable shift in the States leading in the rate of tenancy had occurred, and a still greater shift in the States leading in the rate of tenancy on farms of larger size. Moreover, the rates of tenancy on farms of 50 to 174 acres increased rapidly in the more important agricultural States west of the Mississippi River. Even more rapid were the increases in rates of tenancy on farms of larger size between 1900 and 1930 in the Corn Belt and the Wheat Belt States. In the Corn Belt the rate of tenancy is relatively high on the larger farms and low on the smaller farms, whereas in the Cotton Belt it is relatively low on the larger farms and high on the smaller farms.

CROP LAND HARVESTED AND OTHER LAND IN FARMS IN RELATION TO TENURE OF OPERATOR, UNITED STATES, 1924, 1929, 1934

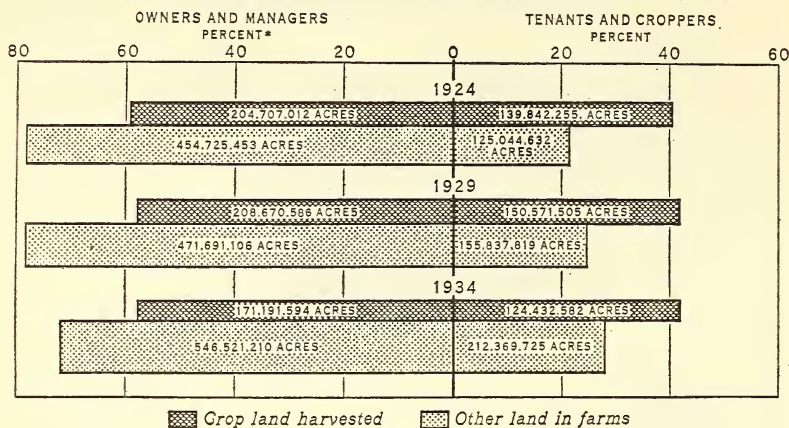


FIGURE 53.—Tenants and croppers have a much larger proportion of their land in cultivation than other farmers. This has important bearing on attempts to control crop production and to check erosion. During the last decade the proportion has diminished. In 1924 crops were harvested from over half the land in tenant and cropper farms, from nearly half in 1929, and from nearly three-eighths in 1934. Of the land in owner-operated farms crops were harvested from less than a third of the total in 1924 and 1929, and from less than a fourth in 1934. Despite the slight decrease between 1930 and 1935 in the percentage of farms operated by tenants and croppers the proportion both of the Nation's cropland and other land in such farms increased. The width of the bars in the graph varies with the total area of land classified by use.

USE OF LAND IN FARMS IN RELATION TO TENURE OF OPERATOR, UNITED STATES, 1924

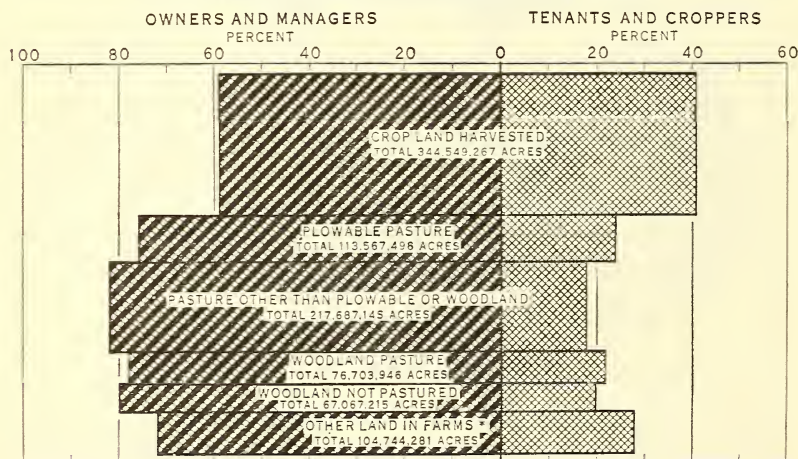


FIGURE 54.—Tenants and croppers tend to concentrate their efforts on crops and pay less attention to livestock than do owners. In 1924, the only year for which the figures are available, 41 percent of the total crop land harvested was in farms operated by tenants and croppers, but only 24 percent of the plowable pasture, 22 percent of the woodland pasture, and 18 percent of the other pasture. Considerably more of these classes of pasture land was under lease because part owners are extensive lessees of land, particularly grazing lands in the Great Plains. For lack of statistics on the extent of these lands, all land operated by owners, part owners, and managers, whether or not leased from others, has been considered together. The width of the bars in the graph varies with the total area of land classified by use.

ACRES OF SELECTED CROPS HARVESTED IN RELATION TO TENURE OF FARM OPERATOR, UNITED STATES, 1924

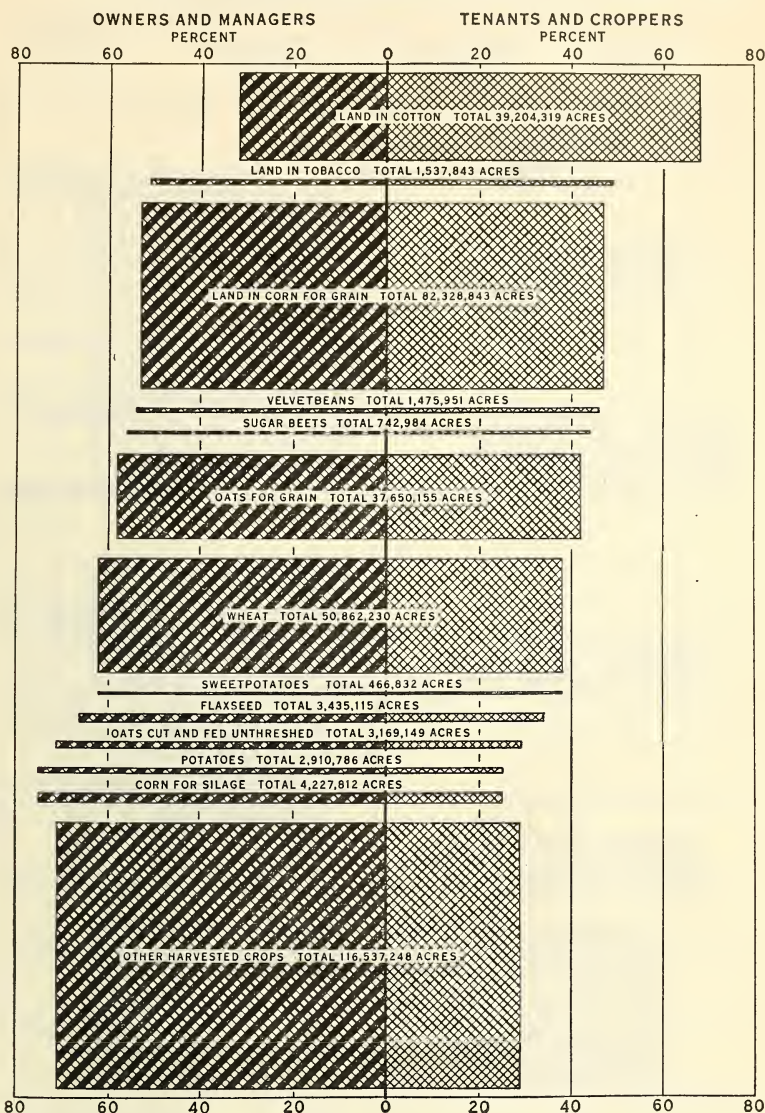


FIGURE 55.—This figure shows for a dozen crops what part of the 1924 acreage was harvested on the farms of tenants and croppers. Few, if any other, crops compare with cotton or tobacco in the extent to which they are grown to be sold off the farm. That the number of opportunities to grow cotton and tobacco has an important bearing on the farm-tenancy situation is apparent from the fact that over two-thirds the acreage from which cotton, and nearly half the acreage from which tobacco was harvested, was on farms of tenants and croppers. Corn for grain has a wider cash market than corn for silage, a difference that may account largely for the fact that tenants and croppers harvested nearly half the corn for grain but only a fourth the corn acreage for silage. There was harvested on tenant farms 38 percent of the wheat acreage, and 42 percent of the oat acreage for grain, crops highly salable, but only 29 percent of the oat acreage cut and fed unthreshed.

NUMBER OF LIVESTOCK IN RELATION TO TENURE OF FARM OPERATOR

The South Compared With the North and West, January 1, 1925

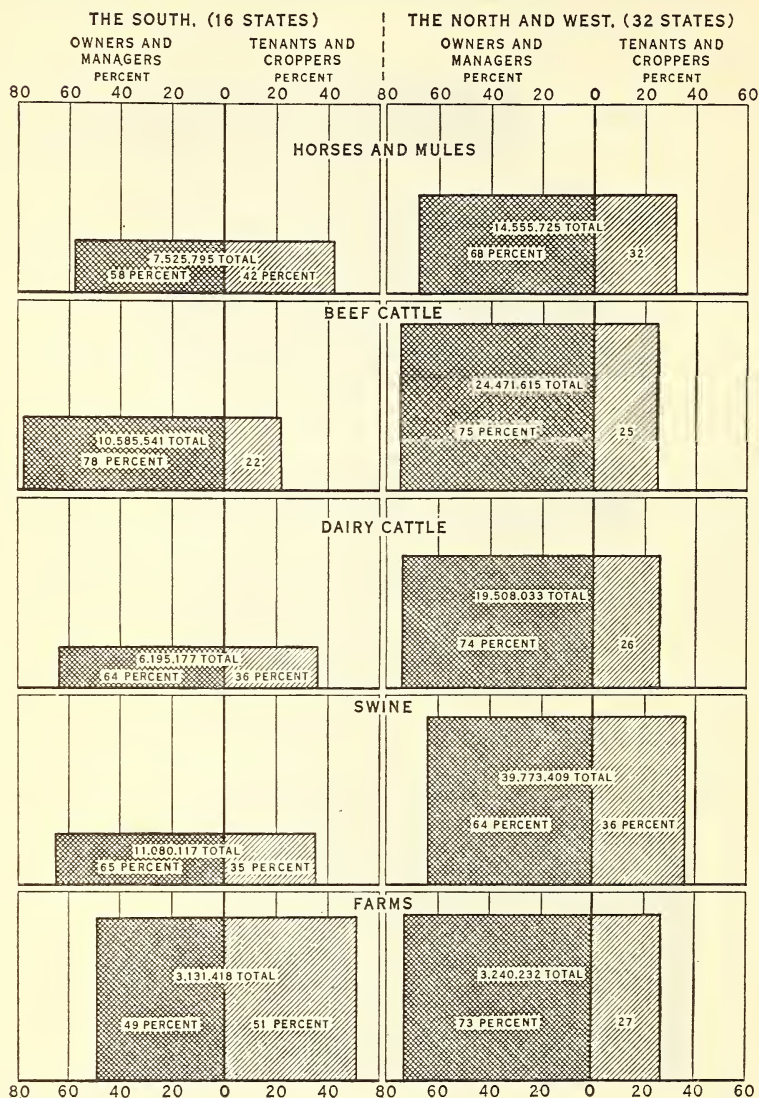


FIGURE 56.—The number of farms in the 16 Southern States nearly equals the number in the 32 other States, but the farmers of the South have little more than a third of the work animals, less than a third of the beef cattle, less than a fourth of the dairy cattle, and less than a fourth of the swine. As compared with southern farms operated by owners and managers, there was on southern farms of tenants and croppers in 1925 less than a proportionate number of each of the several classes of livestock. There were on tenant-operated farms more than a proportionate number of the work animals and swine of the North and West, and very nearly a proportionate share of the beef and dairy cattle. In the North and West, however, it should be recalled that landowners sometimes own a portion of the livestock on tenant farms.

TYPE OF FARMING IN RELATION TO TENURE OF FARMERS, UNITED STATES, 1930

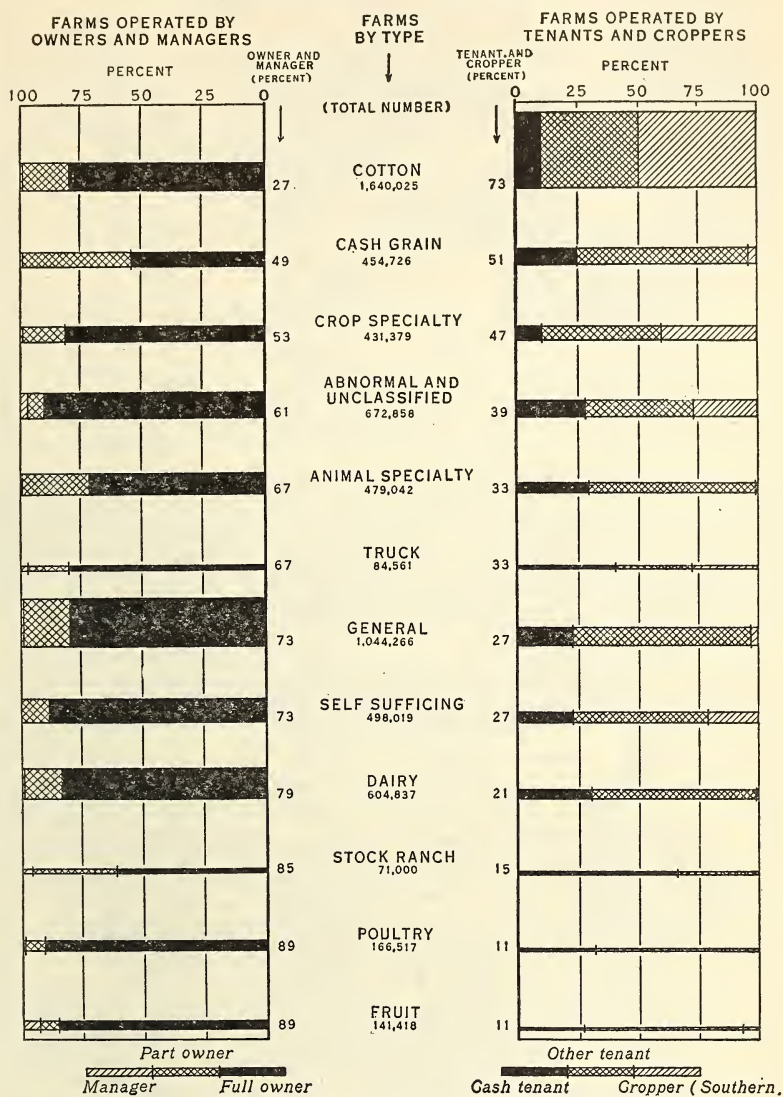


FIGURE 57.—Nearly three-fourths of the cotton farms (cotton 40 percent or more of the value of all products) were worked by tenants and croppers in 1929, more than half the cash-grain farms (wheat, corn for sale, etc.), and nearly half the crop-specialty farms (tobacco, sugar beets, and potatoes mostly). But only a third of the animal-specialty farms (corn and hogs and beef cattle mostly), also a third of the truck farms, and only about a fourth of the general and self-sufficing farms, were operated by tenants and croppers; likewise, only about one-fifth of the dairy farms, one seventh of the stock ranches, and one-ninth of the poultry and fruit farms. Tenancy is high in the South, particularly the Cotton Belt, and in the cash-grain portions of the Corn Belt, largely because of the types of farming. The width of the bars in the graph above varies with the number of farms.

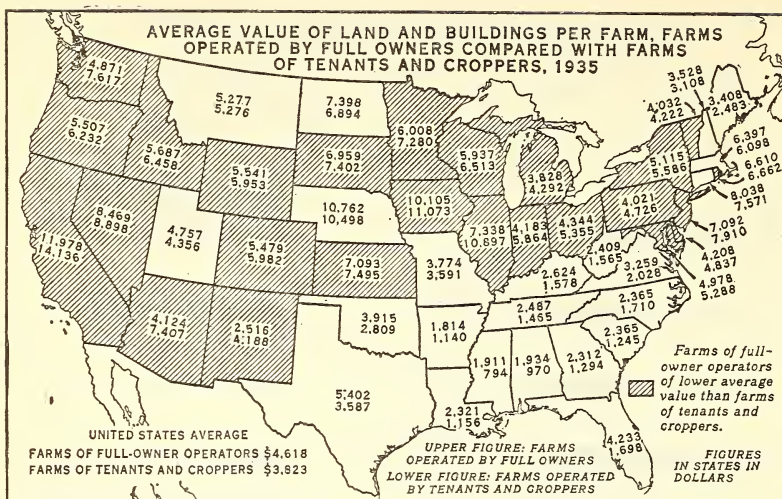


FIGURE 58.—In most States of the North and West tenants generally have farms of higher average value than full-owner operators, but the reverse is true in the South. Inasmuch as farms of the North and West are generally of higher average value than those of the South, it follows that farms operated by tenants and croppers in the North and West are decidedly more valuable than they are in the South; indeed, in 1935 they averaged only \$1,772 in value in the South, which was less than a fourth of the \$7,457 average in the North and West. Between particular States the contrast is naturally even more pronounced. Farms operated by full owners are of more uniform value, those of the North and West averaging \$5,789, or not quite twice the \$2,984 average of the full-owner farms in the South.

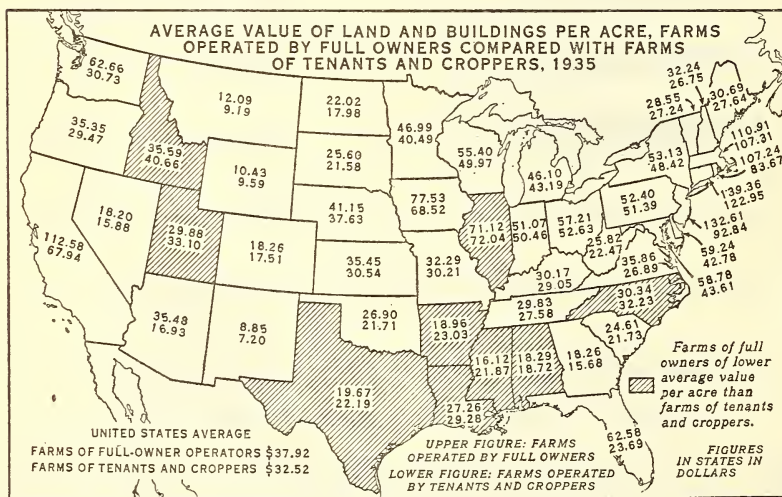


FIGURE 59.—In most States the land and buildings of tenant and cropper farms have a lower per-acre value than those of full-owner operators. This is somewhat surprising in view of the fact that tenants and croppers are to a disproportionate extent located where the best farming lands are, that their farms have relatively little land not in crops, and that the crops grown on their farms are to an unusual extent those having the higher values per acre. Apparently the explanation resides largely in the better buildings on the owner-operated farms, in the better care of the soil, and in the better social conditions in communities of owner farmers, which tend to be reflected in land values.

AVERAGE VALUE OF LAND AND BUILDINGS PER FARM, WHITE AND COLORED FULL OWNERS, CROPPERS, AND OTHER TENANTS, 1935

FARMS OPERATED BY WHITES

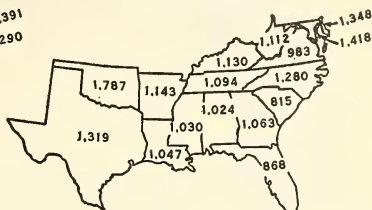
FARMS OPERATED BY COLORED

FULL OWNERS

FULL OWNERS



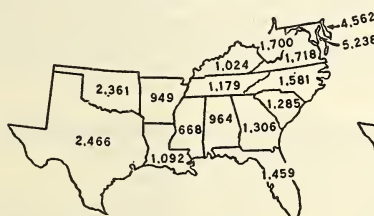
16 SOUTHERN STATES \$3,221



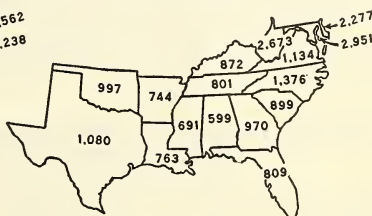
16 SOUTHERN STATES \$1,104

CROPPERS

CROPPERS



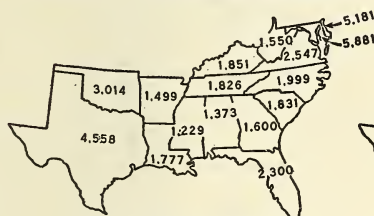
16 SOUTHERN STATES \$1,406



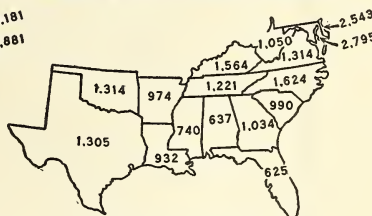
16 SOUTHERN STATES \$845

TENANTS OTHER THAN CROPPERS

TENANTS OTHER THAN CROPPERS



16 SOUTHERN STATES \$2,554



16 SOUTHERN STATES \$1,008

FIGURE 60.—White farmers of the South, whether full owners, croppers, or other tenants, operate farms of higher average value than colored farmers having a corresponding tenure status, but none of these groups had farms of very high average value. Farms of white full-owner operators of the South averaged only \$3,221 in value in 1935, ranging from \$1,899 in Arkansas to \$5,849 in Texas. By contrast the farms of southern colored croppers averaged only \$845, ranging from \$599 in Alabama to \$2,951 in Maryland. These are low values for a farm when one considers that the buildings are included in the values given. The white croppers of Mississippi had farms of slightly lower average value than the colored croppers. Comparatively few white croppers operate in the highly fertile and valued delta section of the State, where most of the colored croppers of the State are located.

AVERAGE VALUE OF FARMS IN RELATION TO THE PERCENTAGE OF FARMS OPERATED BY TENANTS

Corn and Cotton Belt Counties Compared, 1930

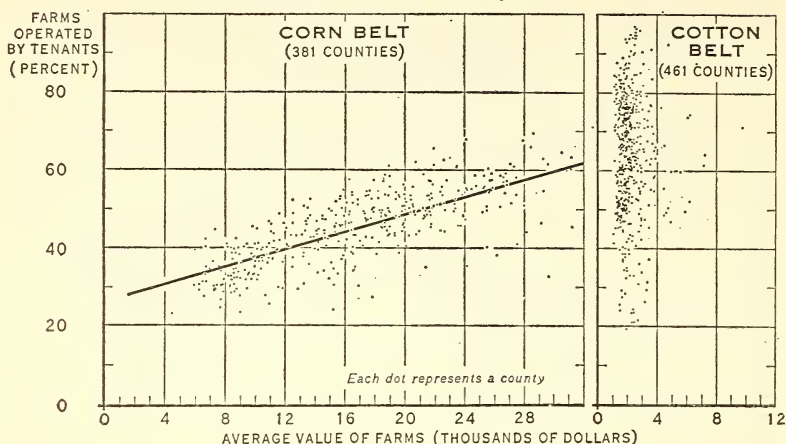


FIGURE 61.—Farm values have an important relationship to the rate of tenancy in the North and West. Most tenants rent because they have not the means to own, and seek farms productive enough to reward them adequately for their labor and necessary expenditures. Comparing the 381 counties in the Corn Belt, it will be noted that there is a distinctly upward trend in tenancy with increases in value of farms. In these counties in 1930 tenancy averaged 34 percent where farms averaged less than \$11,610 in value, but 45 percent where farms averaged between \$11,610 and \$21,610 in value, and 56 percent where farms were of higher value. Cotton Belt counties differ greatly in percentage of farm tenancy, but the average value of farms ranges only from \$1,000 to \$3,000 in most counties.

AVERAGE VALUE OF FARMS IN RELATION TO THE PROPORTION OF LAND IN FARMS OPERATED UNDER LEASE

Corn and Cotton Belt Counties Compared, 1930

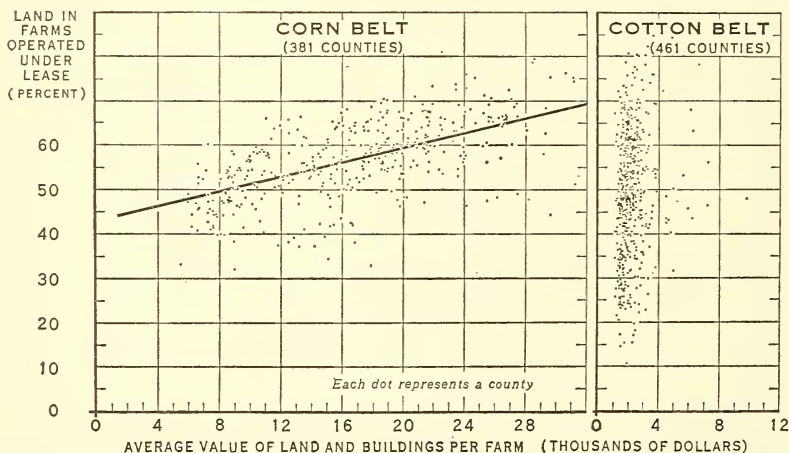


FIGURE 62.—The amount of farm land under lease includes that rented to part owners. It affords, therefore, a more complete measure of tenant farming than the number of tenants. In the 381 Corn Belt counties the proportion of farm land under lease is about 12 percent greater than the proportion of farmers who rent all of the land they farm. And among these counties, in general, the higher the average value of the farms the higher the percentage of land under lease to the operator. In the Cotton Belt east of the Oklahoma-Texas prairies the counties differ but little in average value of farms, but much in percentage of land operated by croppers and under lease to renters and part owners.

VALUE OF FARM DWELLING IN RELATION TO TENURE OF FARM OPERATOR

9 North Central Compared with 16 Southern States, 1930

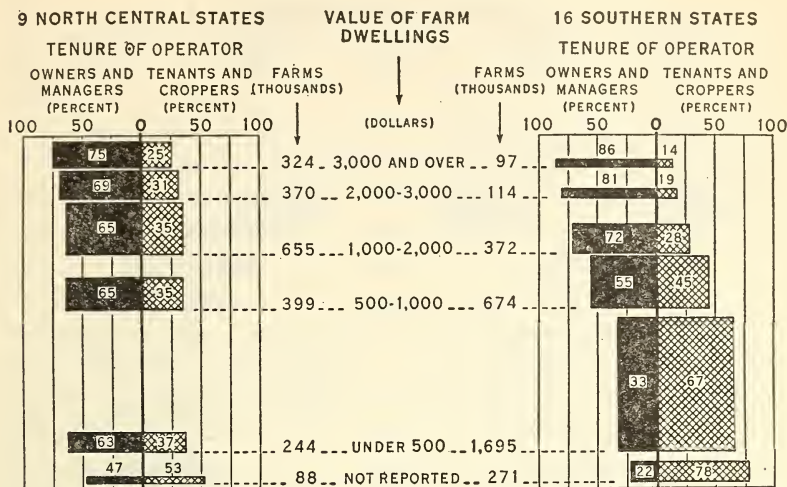
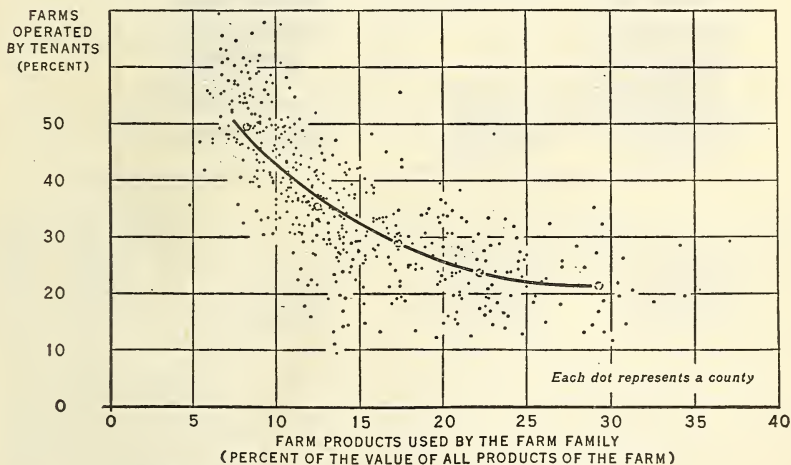


FIGURE 63.—Rate of tenancy on farms increases with decreasing values of dwellings, both in North Central and in Southern States. Highest tenancy rates occur on farms that have no dwellings; lowest on farms with dwellings valued at more than \$3,000. Large proportions of Southern farm dwellings are inexpensive; in 1935 nearly 1,700,000 were valued at less than \$500. Two-thirds of the occupants of these dwellings were tenants and croppers. There are comparatively few such inferior farm dwellings in North Central States, and only a few are tenant-occupied. Rate of tenancy is less in the South than in North Central States on farms with dwellings worth \$1,000 or more, but the South has comparatively few such farm dwellings.

PERCENTAGE OF FARM PRODUCTS USED BY THE FARM FAMILY IN RELATION TO PERCENTAGE OF FARMS OPERATED BY TENANTS, NORTH CENTRAL STATES*, 1930



* THE 489 COUNTIES COMPRISE ALL COUNTIES OF OHIO, INDIANA, ILLINOIS, IOWA, AND ALL BUT THE SEVEN MORE IMPORTANT COTTON-PRODUCING COUNTIES OF MISSOURI

FIGURE 64.—There is a decided relationship between the degree of commercialism in the agriculture and the percentage of farms operated by tenants. The smaller the proportion of the farm products which are used by the farm family, the higher the rate of tenancy. Classifying the 489 counties on basis of percentage of farm products used by the farm family in 1929, in 97 counties this percentage was over 20; in 80, between 15 and 20; in 189, between 10 and 15; and in 123 it was less than 10. In these groups of counties the proportion of farms operated by tenants in 1930 was 23, 29, 35, and 49 percent, respectively.

AGE AND COLOR OF FARMERS IN RELATION TO TENURE, 1910 AND 1930

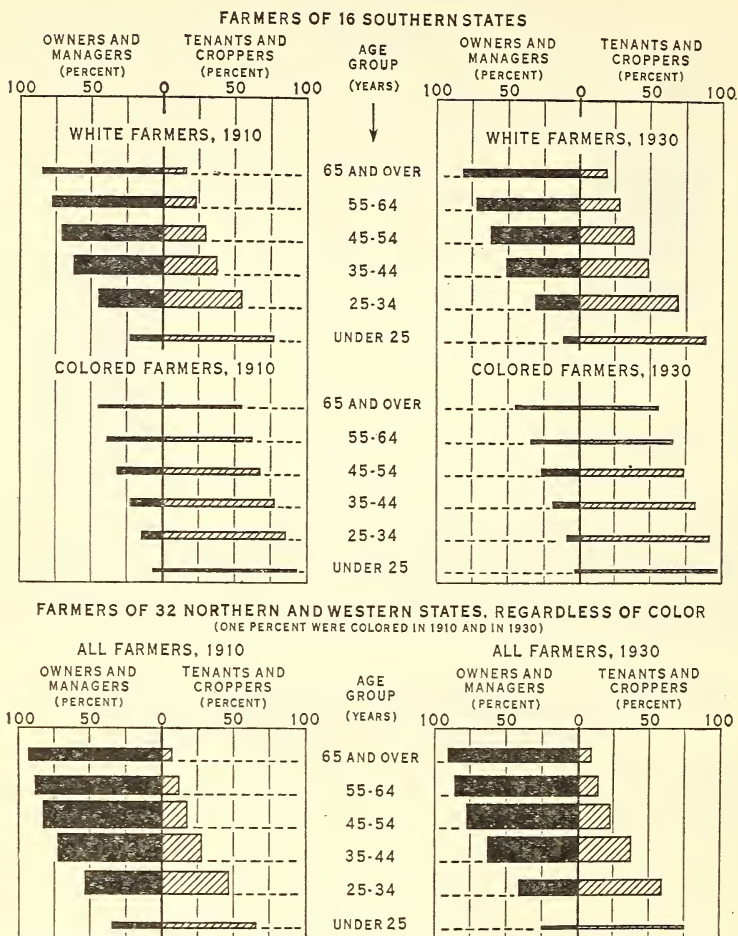


FIGURE 65.—Two outstanding facts with respect to changes among farmers by age and tenure between 1910 and 1930 are (1) the increase in the number of older and the decrease in the number of younger farmers (indicated by the width of the bars above); and (2) the increase in tenancy among farmers of all ages, particularly among farmers under middle age—among whom tenancy was already most common in 1910. These facts indicate that, if a young man wished to farm, it became increasingly necessary to accept the status of tenant or cropper, and that fewer young men were finding acceptable opportunities to become farmers even as tenants or croppers. Between 1910 and 1930 the number of farmers in the United States under 35 years of age decreased by 412,000, while those aged 55 years and over increased 238,000. In the South white tenants and croppers under 35 years of age increased 23,000, colored tenants and croppers decreased 21,000, white owner farmers decreased 129,000, colored owner farmers decreased 20,000. Apparently more young white farmers in the South than formerly are failing to climb the tenure ladder, while many young rural Negroes are not even making the attempt. In the North and West tenants and croppers of this age decreased 71,000, owner farmers decreased 188,000. Evidently, fewer young men in the North and West were attempting to farm, at least, just prior to the depression. Turning to farmers over 55 years of age, major changes were as follows: In the South white tenants and croppers increased 47,000, colored tenants and croppers increased 19,000, white owner farmers increased 72,000, and colored owner farmers increased 2,500. In the North and West tenant farmers over 55 years of age increased 25,000, and owner farmers increased 72,000.

AGE OF FARMERS IN RELATION TO TENURE

STATES IN WHICH AT LEAST HALF THE FARMERS WERE TENANTS

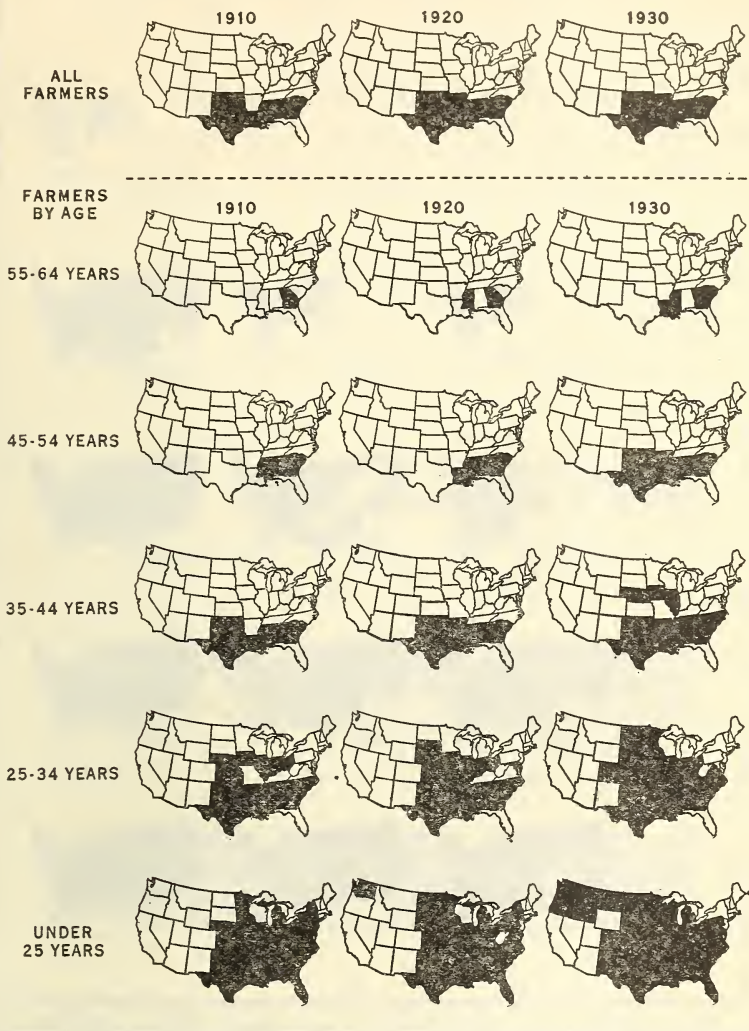


FIGURE 66.—This figure shows the increasing extent to which farmers of different age groups have had to accept status as tenants in order to farm at all. It shows in black the States wherein at least half the farmers of a given age were tenants or croppers in 1910, in 1920, and in 1930. Thus it indicates roughly the retardation in the rate of progress up what has been termed "the tenure ladder in agriculture." In increasing numbers of States, as time has passed, half or more of the farms operated by farmers of a given age have become tenant farms. It has always been more expedient, if not necessary, for the younger farmers to operate as tenants than has been the case with older farmers. The capital and credit standing, by means of which desirable farms are purchased, come with the years; but with the years come advancing age and changes that have made it increasingly difficult for farmers to acquire farms of their own.

OWNER FARMERS ON THE SAME FARM FIVE YEARS OR MORE

Percentage of All Owner Farmers, by States, 1910, 1920, 1930

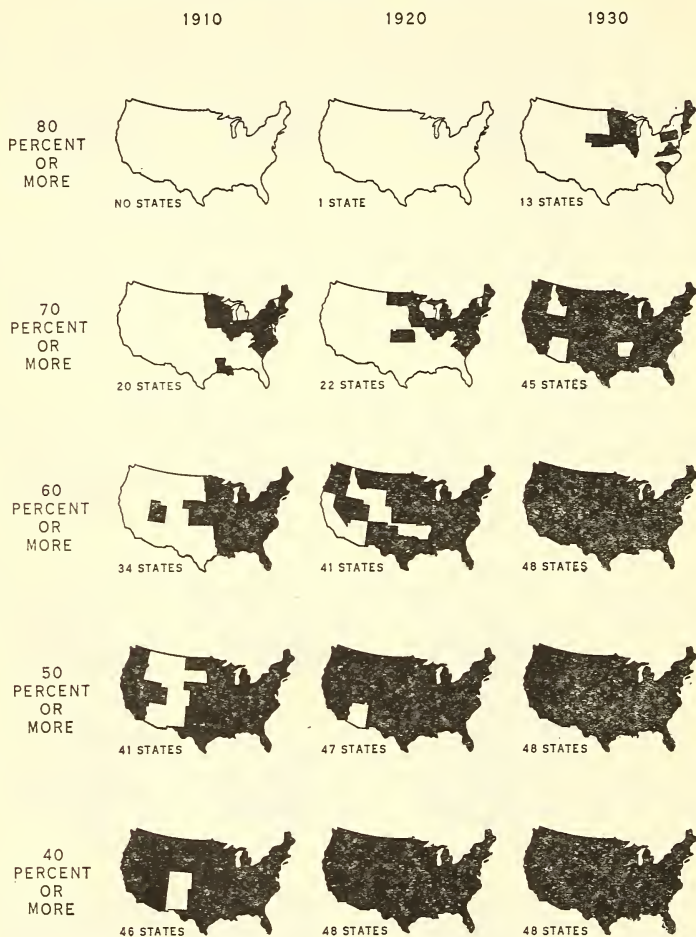


FIGURE 67.—A general impression of change in the stability of farm occupancy may be obtained by considering the percentages in the several States of the farmers who on successive dates have been on the same farms a given number of years. Notable differences in relative increases in numbers of farms between the census years should be taken into consideration. For instance, that less than half the farmers of South Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona operating places of their own in 1910 had, at that time, been on their places less than 5 years was, no doubt, largely a consequence of a relatively large increase in owner-operated farms in those States between 1900 and 1910. Nevertheless, the fact remained that the duration of occupancy of farms increased between 1910 and 1930 in nearly all parts of the Nation.

TENANT FARMERS ON THE SAME FARM FIVE YEARS OR MORE

Percentage of All Tenant Farmers, by States, 1910, 1920, 1930

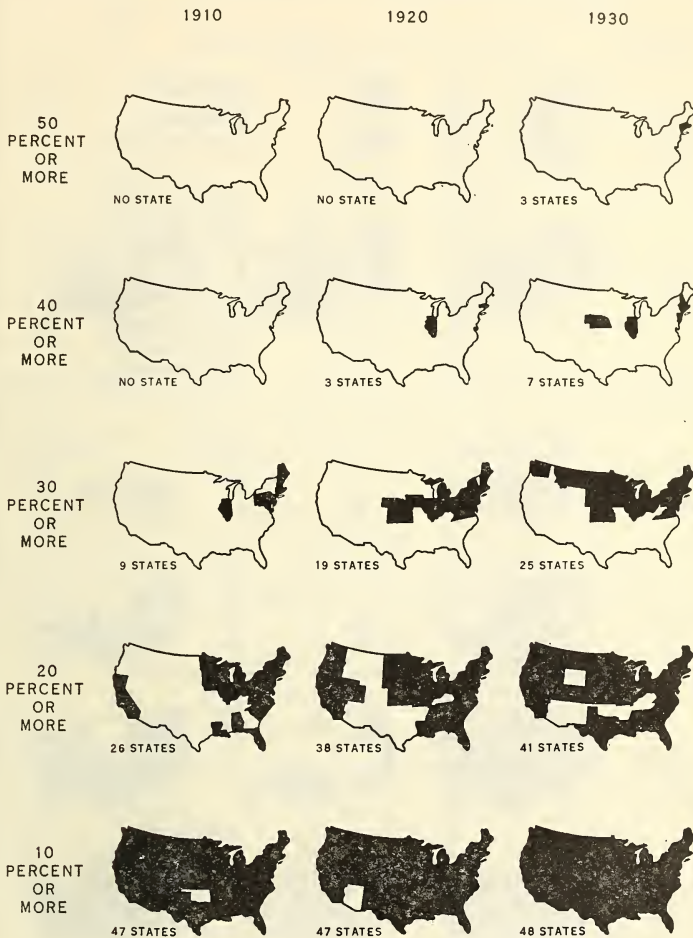


FIGURE 68.—On tenant-operated as well as on owner-operated farms increasing proportions of the farmers have been on their places 5 years or more. However, the proportion of owner farmers on their places 5 years or longer invariably exceeds that of tenants on their places 5 years or longer. Only in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, for example, had as many as half the tenant farmers been on their places 5 years or more in 1930; in no State was this true in 1910 nor in 1920. But among the owner farmers of every State at least three-fifths had been on their places 5 years or more in 1930.

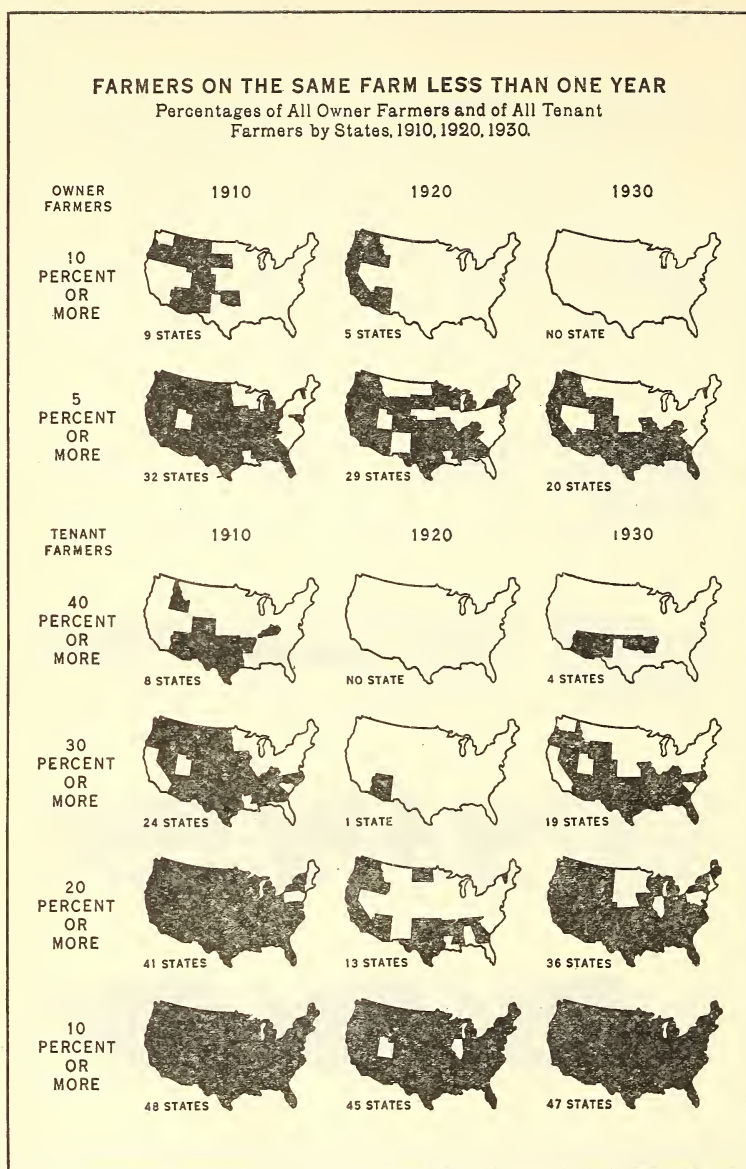


FIGURE 69.—The number of States wherein a tenth or more of the owner farmers had been on the farm less than 1 year decreased from nine in 1910 to five in 1920 and to none at all in 1930. States with 5 percent or more of the owner farmers in first-year occupancies decreased from 32 in 1910 to 29 in 1920 and to 20 in 1930. States where the proportion of farmers in first-year occupancies is relatively high are mostly either cotton-growing States or States where agriculture was at the time in a more or less pioneer condition. Among tenant farmers a greater unrest seems to have existed in the year 1929-30 than in the year 1919-20, judging from the greater number of States in which given percentages of tenants were in first-year occupancies in 1930. Or the change in date of census enumeration from January 1 to April 1 may be a major factor, and the change therefore nominal rather than real.

LENGTH OF OCCUPANCY OF FARMS, OWNER FARMERS COMPARED WITH TENANTS AND CROPPERS

United States, 1910, 1920, 1930 and Geographic Divisions, 1930

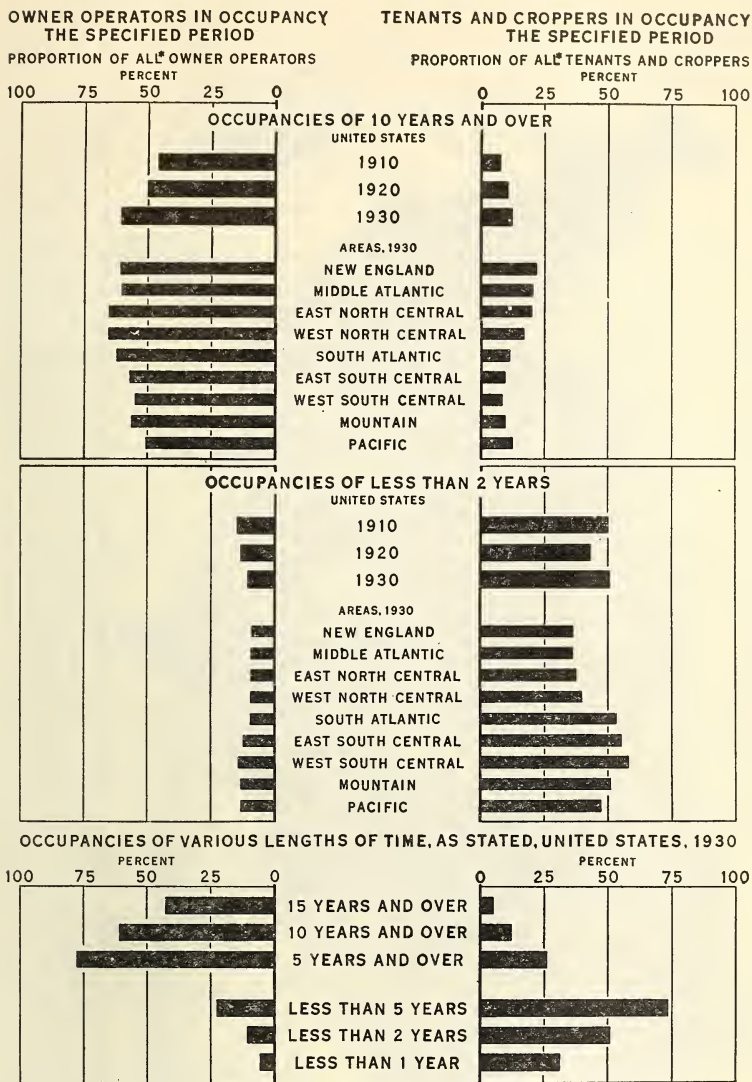


FIGURE 70.—Considering the United States as a whole, farm occupancies of 10 years and more among both owner and tenant farmers constituted a greater percentage of all occupancies in 1930 than in 1920, and a greater percentage in 1920 than in 1910. That some tenant farmers have relatively secure occupancies is indicated by the fact that 5.5 percent, or at least 1 in 20, had been on the farm occupied in 1930 for at least 15 years. In the New England, the Middle Atlantic, and the East North Central States more than a fifth of the tenant farmers had been on their farms at least 10 years in 1930. Nevertheless, it remains a matter of concern that about 30 percent of all tenant farmers had been on their places less than a year when the 1930 census was taken.

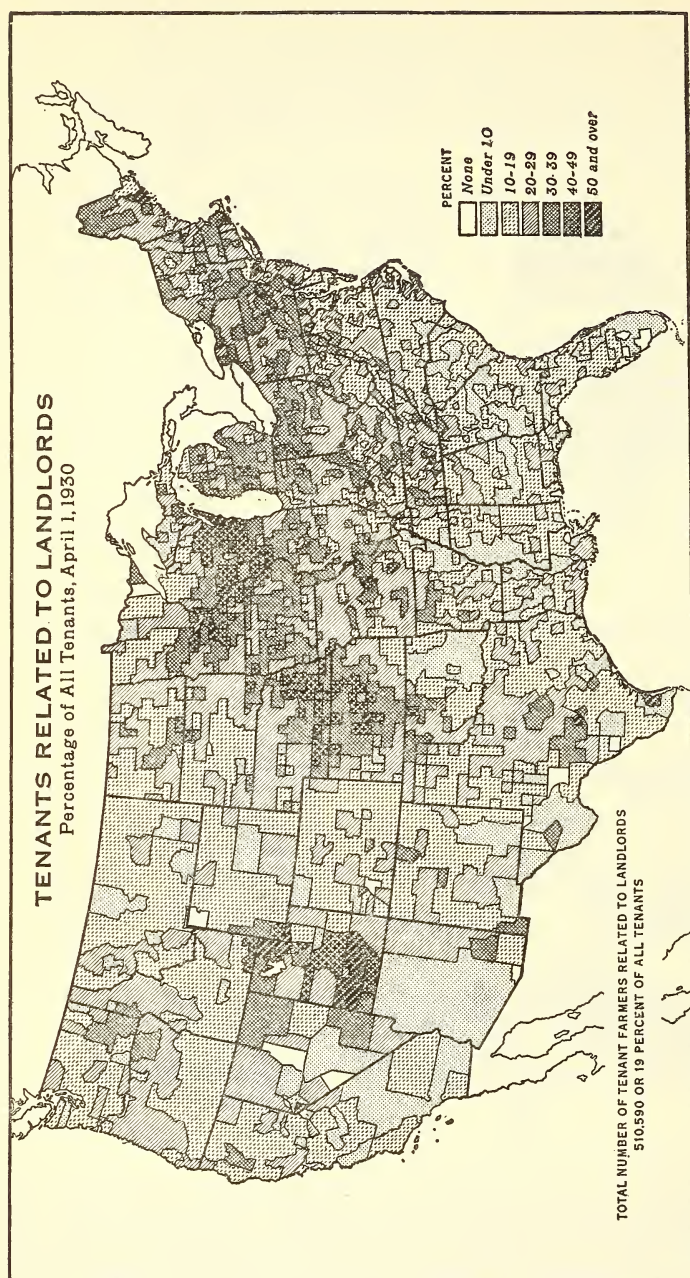


FIGURE 71.—One measure of the degree of alliance and the character of the understanding between farm tenants and their landlords is the extent to which they are related. In 1930 nearly a fifth of the tenant farmers of the United States were brothers, sisters, children, or grandchildren of their landlords, or had married a brother, sister, child, or grandchild of their landlord. The percentage of the tenants who are related to their landlords is comparatively low in the South, also in the drier portions of the Great Plains region, where many of the farms are quite new. In the South it is lowest in areas where colored farmers form the largest percentage of all farmers, for most of the landlords of such areas are white. It is also low in eastern Oklahoma—the old Indian Territory. Over two-fifths of the farm tenants in many northern counties are related to their landlords. Most of these counties are located in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Nebraska, Kansas, and Utah.

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